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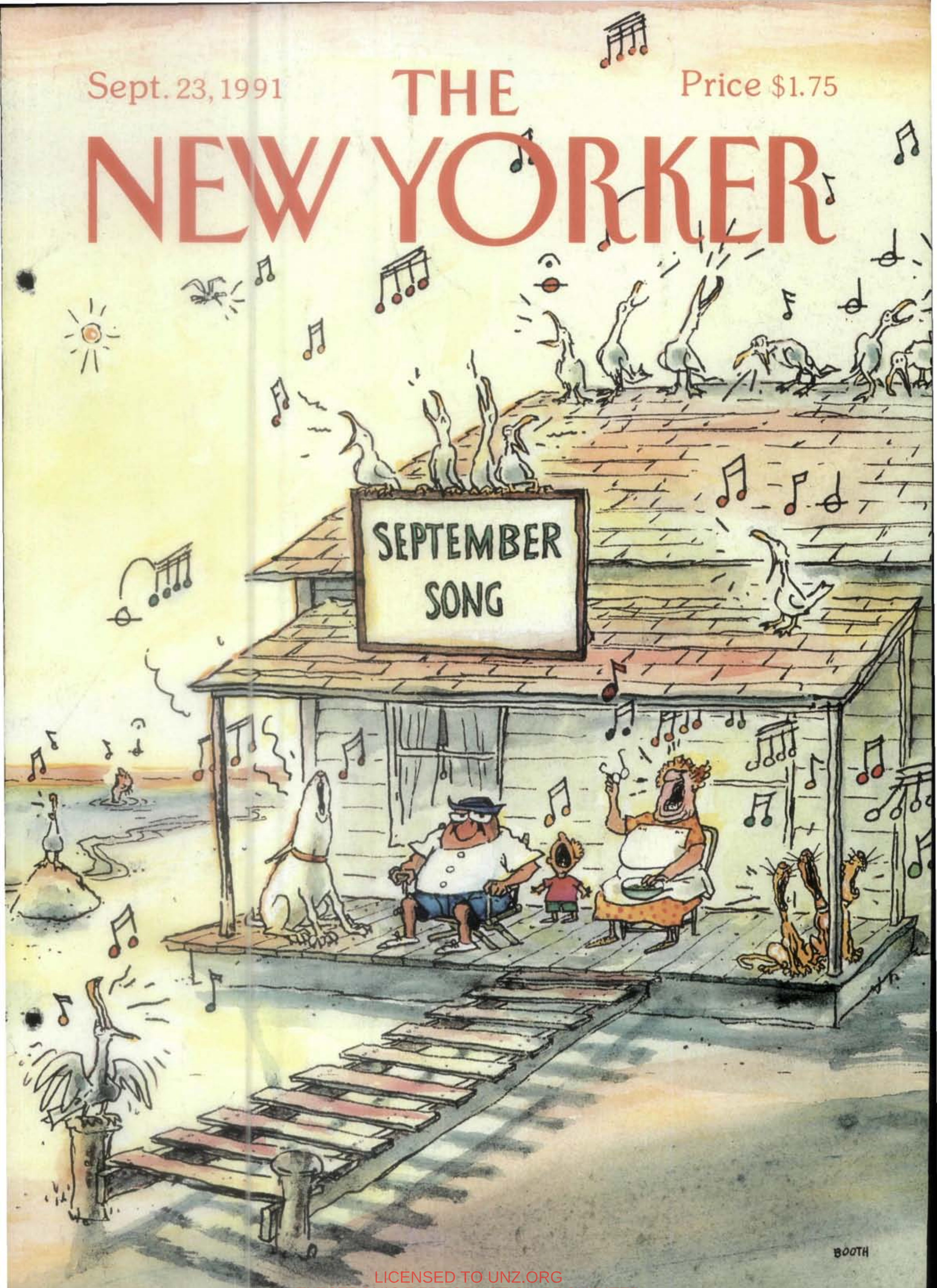
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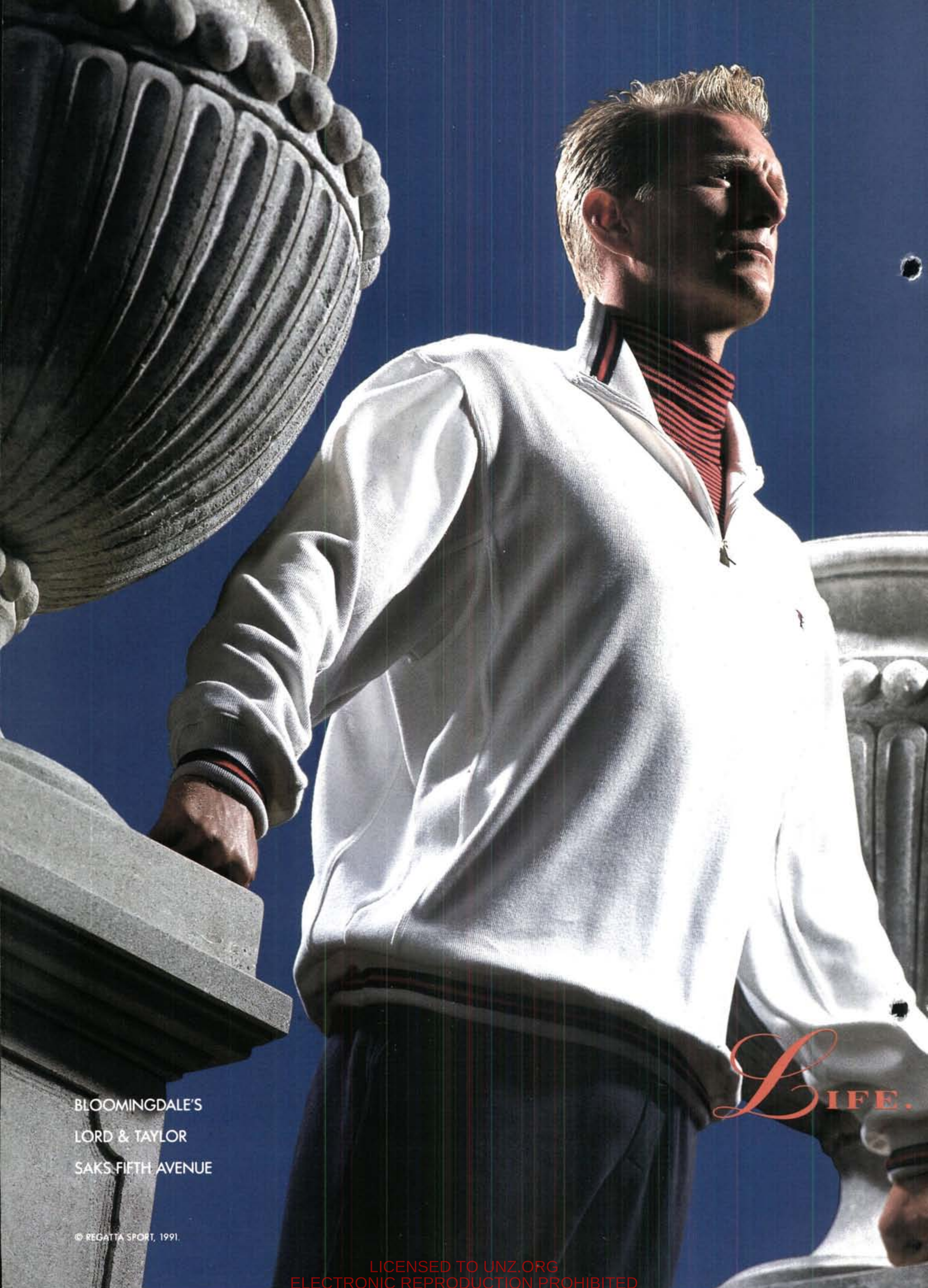

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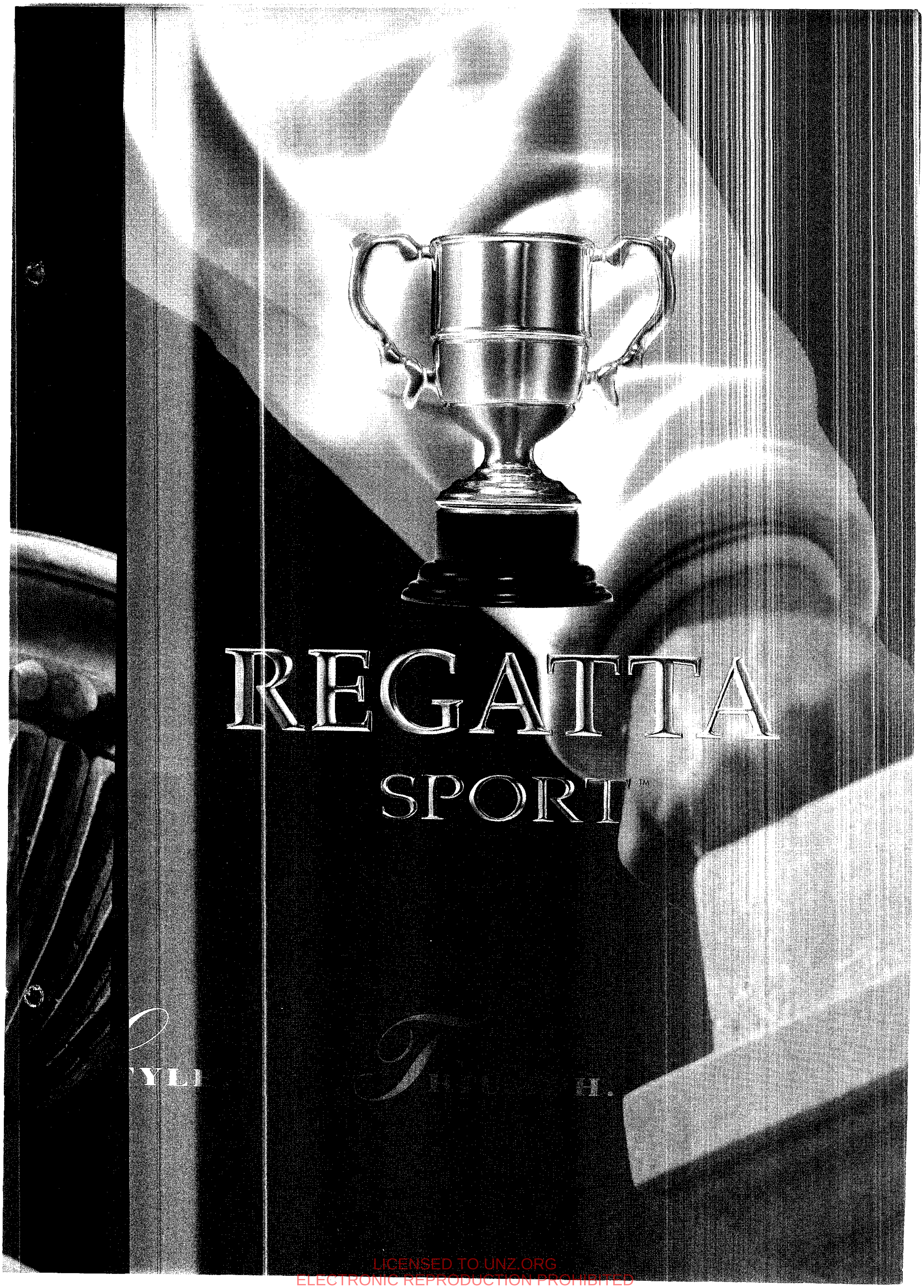
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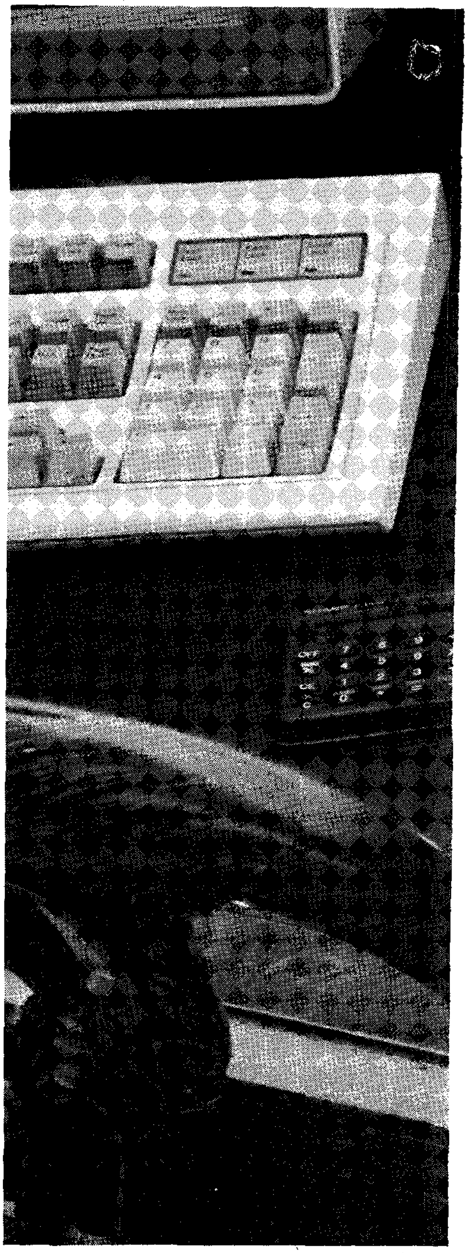

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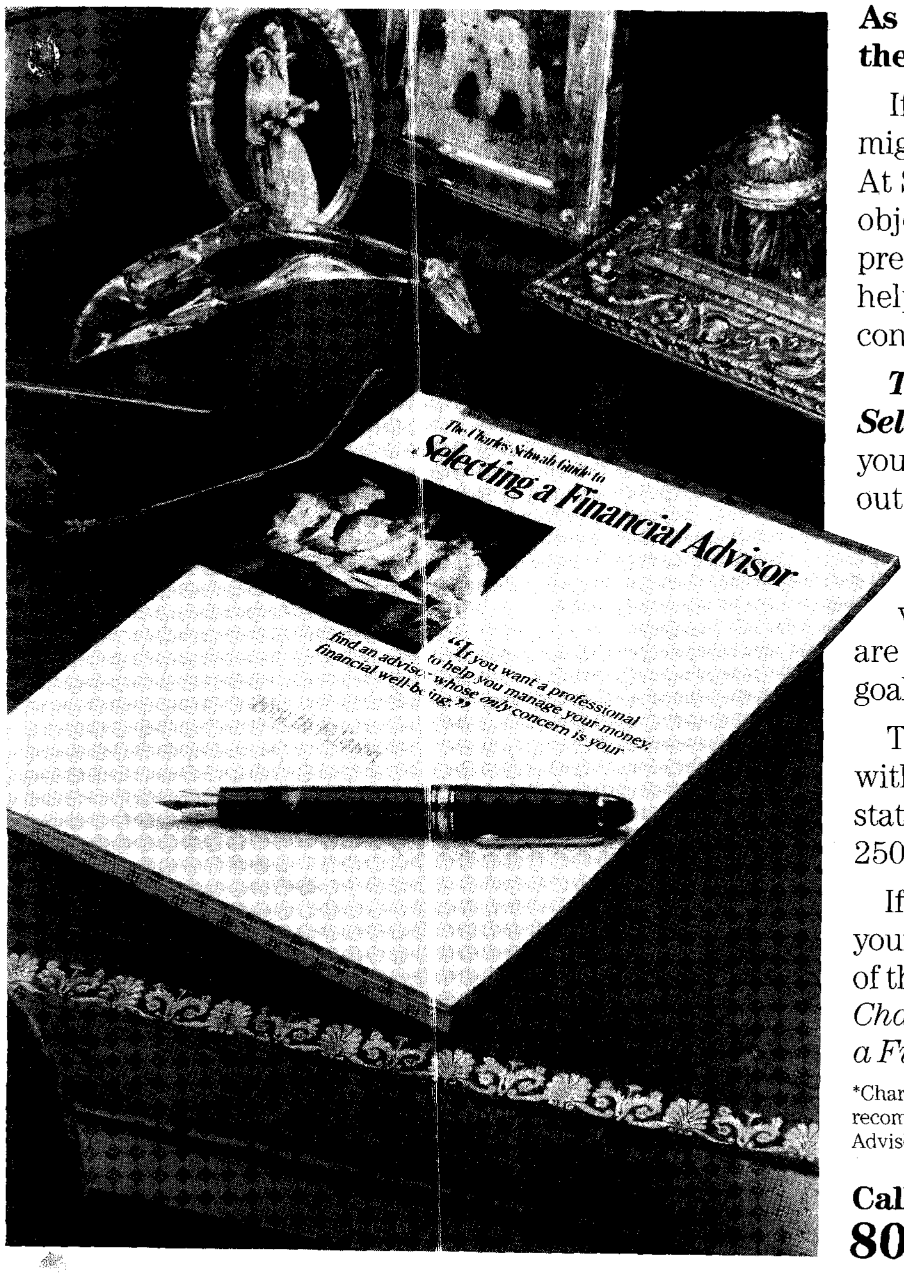
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# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

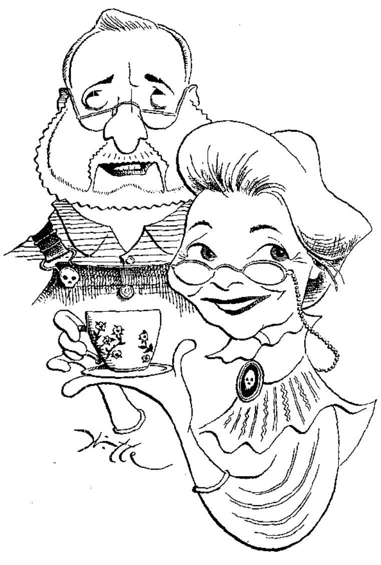
## THE THEATRE

THE word from 44th Street: Howard McGillin has joined the company of "The Secret Garden" (replacing Mandy Patinkin as Archibald Craven), and a cast album of the show is being recorded for release around Christmastime. We can't decide which is the happier piece of news. It's grand about the recording because for a while it sounded as if there wasn't going to be one, and it's grand about Mr. McGillin because he's so right for the role.

Musically, it's not hard to understand the casting of Mr. Patinkin as Mary's gloomy uncle, but from a narrative standpoint, it was always a bit of a mistake. Mr. Patinkin excels at projecting just the wrong sort of gothic depression—he's more Young Werther than Mr. Rochester. The kind of brooding that Mr. Craven goes in for—and he's a haunted sort of man—leads to self-loathing rather than self-absorption. Think of the lugubrious way Herbert Marshall addressed the little girl in the 1949 movie. McGillin has exactly that quality of speaking absentmindedly to a child as though she were a grown-up person.

Whereas Mr. Patinkin was always suffering and emoting, there is a wonderful stillness to Mr. McGillin's performance. It's the same stillness that characterizes Daisy Eagan's performance as Mary—a knowledge that you almost never have to show the audience what your character is supposed to be feeling: we'll get it anyway. And since this elegant understatement is to be found in the performance of her understudy, Melody Kay—as, indeed, it tempers the performances of John Cameron Mitchell, Alison Fraser, and Rebecca Luker—we have to assume that it's the result of Susan H. Schulman's direction.

It was in an attempt to second-act "The Secret Garden" recently that we caught Miss Kaye's performance. (We were in the neighborhood with some time to kill.) The audience was the most interesting and varied we'd seen on Broadway since "The Grapes of Wrath." There were downtown types, Upper West Side types, mothers clutching illustrated editions of the book. There wasn't a free seat in the house. We stood happily at the back trying to figure out whether Miss Kaye was every bit as good as Miss Eagan or wonderful in her own way. In the end, we couldn't decide.



*George C. Scott and Teresa Wright in "On Borrowed Time"*

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### OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

**Bon Appetit!**—Jean Stapleton in a musical staging of Ruth Draper's monologue "The Italian Lesson" and of a Julia Child cooking lesson. Directed by Carey Perloff; music by Lee Hoiby. Previews through Sept. 23. Opens Sept. 25 at 7. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

**Finkel's Follies**—A show billed as "a new American musical vaudeville," conceived by and starring Fyvush Finkel. In previews. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

**Macbeth**—Stephen McHattie stars in the Riverside Shakespeare Company's season opener. In previews. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

**On Borrowed Time**—A revival of a 1938 play by Paul Osborn, with George C. Scott, who also directed, Conrad Bain, Nathan Lane, and Teresa Wright. Previews begin Sept. 20. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

**Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love**—A play by Brad Fraser. With Scott Renderer, Lenore Zann, Michael Connor, Michelle Kronin, Kimberley Pistone, Clark Gregg, and Sam Rockwell. Previews Sept. 17-18. Opens Sept. 19 at 8. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

**Young Playwrights Festival**—Presenting "Donut World," by Matthew Peterson; "Man at His Best," by Carlota Zimmerman; "Secrets to Square Dancing," by Denise Maher; and "I'm Not Stupid," by David Rodriguez. Previews begin Sept. 24. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

### OPENED RECENTLY

**And the World Goes 'Round: The Songs of Kander & Ebb**—A musical revue, with Joel Blum, Bob Cuccioli, Karen Mason, Terry Burrell, and Karen Ziémba. Andrea Green substitutes for Ms. Ziémba in some performances. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

**Another Person Is a Foreign Country**—A "site-specific" play by Charles L. Mee, Jr. Presented by En Garde Arts and directed by Anne Bogart. (Towers Courtyard, Central Park W. at 106th St. Closes Sept. 29. For information about tickets, call 274-8123.)

**Body and Soul**—David Mitchell and Tom Delling star in John Glines' gay romantic comedy. (Courtyard Playhouse, 39 Grove St. 869-3530.)

**Breaking Legs**—The Mafia meets Off Broadway. Philip Bosco and Vincent Gardenia play a pair of mobsters who back a new play in order to win a young dramatist for Gardenia's daughter. Tom Dulack wrote the comedy; John Tillinger directed it. With Ronald Maccone, Larry Storch, Nicolas Surovy, and, above all, Susan Giosa as the daughter who spins the plot. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/3/91.) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

**Damon Runyon's Tales of Broadway**—A show conceived and performed by John Martello. (Double Image, 15 Vandam St. 924-1120.)

**Dress Suits to Hire**—A revival of Holly Hughes' 1988 play, with Peggy Shaw and Lois Weaver. (One Dream, 232 West Broadway. 279-4200. Closes Sept. 21.)

**The Good Times Are Killing Me**—The cartoonist Lynda Barry devised this memory play of words and pop tunes about a racially mixed neighborhood. At the heart of it is the friendship of two little girls, one white, the other black, who are delightfully portrayed by Angela Goethals and Chandra Wilson. The undercurrent of serious comment on race doesn't add much, but every humorous scene scores a bull's-eye. Also with Wendell Pierce and Holly Felton. Mark Brokaw directed. The show was seen this spring at Second Stage. (5/6/91) (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

**The Jersey Girls**—A play by Larry Manogue. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

**Los Jibaros Progresistas**—A production of a nineteenth-century Puerto Rican musical by Ramón Mendez Quinones. Performed in Spanish. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293.)

**Lips Together, Teeth Apart**—Two couples share a beach house on Fire Island over the Fourth of July weekend, in Terrence McNally's very funny play about a number of serious matters. With Roxanne Hart, Anthony Heald, Jonathan Hadary, and Deborah Rush; directed by John Tillinger. (7/8/91) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

**Lost in Yonkers**—There's not one glimmer of honesty or authenticity in this family melodrama by Neil Simon. Set in Yonkers during the Second World War, it's about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (3/11/91) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

**The Matchmaker**—A dull and discouraging revival of Thornton Wilder's merry farce. (9/9/91) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Closes Sept. 22.)

**Miss Saigon**—Oh, the horror! The horror! (4/29/91) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)

**Pageant**—A musical spoof of beauty contests. Book and lyrics by Bill Russell and Frank Kelly and music by Albert Evans. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 262-3333.)

**Penn & Teller Rot in Hell**—Seen recently on the Great White Way, the dynamic duo are now performing their repertoire of tricks Off Broadway. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

**The Secret Garden**—This lovely musical adaptation of the classic children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett isn't just a kiddie show. Subtle, charming, intelligent, and wholly literary in its approach to adaptation, it manages both to be faithful to the spirit of the book and to comment on the particular moment in time that produced it. (5/13/91) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

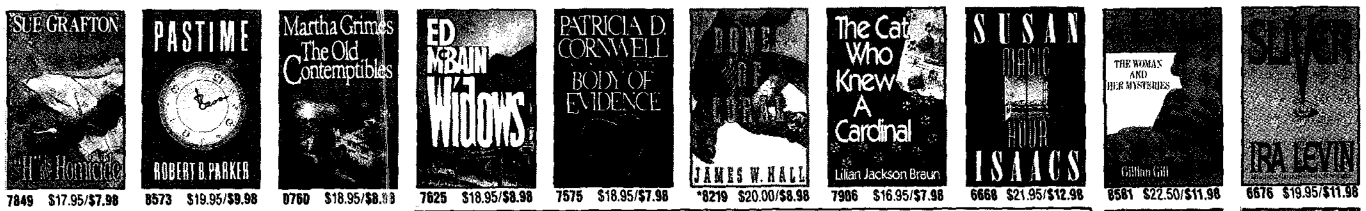
**The Skin of Our Teeth**—Thornton Wilder's play, presented by the Jean Cocteau Repertory. Craig Smith and Elise Stone lead the cast. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

**Song of Singapore**—A musical with a promising concept: turn a Polish veterans' hall into a Singapore night club, circa 1941, and spill murder and mayhem onto the premises. Unfortunately, the lavish settings (by John Lee Beatty) and the musical talent (led by the winsome and versatile Donna Murphy) cannot conceal a very thin story and a host of excruciatingly bad jokes. Another problem: on a busy night the seating arrangements here can be extremely cramped. (17 [illegible]ing Pl., at 15th St. 228-0844.)

**Sublime Lives**—A play by Paul Firestone, with Pamela Cecil, Jordan Charney, Susan Farwell, Hans Friedrichs, Ron Keith, Lenny Singer, and William Verderber. (Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

**Tartuffe**—Molière's comedy, in a translation by Donald M. Frame. With Martin LaPlatney, Joanne Camp, and Frank Geraci. (Pearl, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708.)

**The Will Rogers Follies**—The sets by Tony Walton, the direction and choreography by Tommy Tune, the costumes by Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are neglected. Keith Carradine makes an engaging, amusing Rogers, but that is not enough, despite Cy Coleman's pleasant score. (5/13/91) (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)



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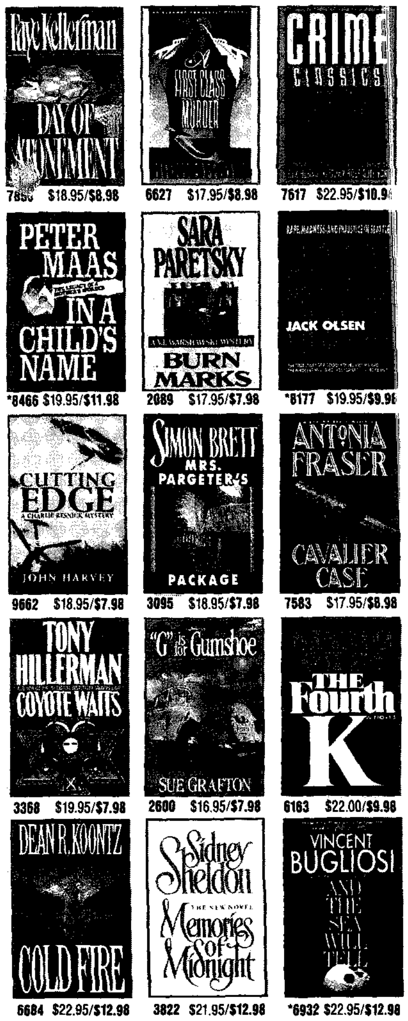

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### LONG RUNS

**CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.). . . **CITY OF ANGELS:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. With Donna Bullock, Joel Higgins, Richard Kline, Michael Rupert, Susan Terry, and Linda Thorson. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.). . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turned thirty-one in May. (*Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan* St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.). . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1991½:** This newly revised revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.). . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.). . . **GRAND HOTEL:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.). . . **ONCE ON THIS ISLAND:** An enchanting musical, set in the Caribbean, by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **PERFECT CRIME:** A murder mystery by Warren Manzi. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401.). . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew *Lloyd* Webber *musical is fun*—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.). . . **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION:** You're best off knowing nothing about the John Guare play other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright and the director Jerry Zaks. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. Kelly Bishop now has the lead. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

## DANCE

WE'VE always loved Native American dancing as an idea—that is, as a static image of human beings linked in a ring of time under a mantling sky. But actually to follow the dances as *dances* can be a challenge for the average non-Native American observer. Distinctions are what make art seem articulate, and dancing only begins to make sense to the eye when the change or evolution of movement can be steadily perceived. In many Native American dances, however, such change occurs not spectacularly, through the reconfiguration of posture and action, but rather quite subtly, through delicate shifts of accent within the same step sequence. The American Indian Dance Theatre, which is performing at the Joyce through October 6, is particularly sensitive to the need for making movement visible to dance audiences at large without adulterating the dances themselves in the process. To this end, it has recruited champion performers from powwows and festivals throughout North America. For the purposes of putting these dances on a theatrical stage, virtuosity has served as the definition of authenticity. We aren't always comfortable with the equation, but in this case it appears to work. When the company made its début at the Joyce, in 1989, the dances had rhythmic variety and visual interest. They still require concentration to absorb fully, but the effort is worthwhile.

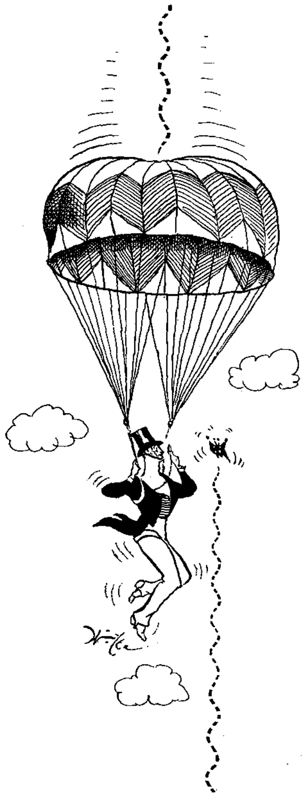
When we saw that the company would be returning to New York, we paid a visit to the National Museum of the American Indian, whose public galleries are located at 155th Street and Broadway. (The museum, now part of the Smithsonian, plans to relocate to Washington by the end of the century, with a portion of its collection to remain in New York, at another site.) The installations—decades old and dreary—muffle the grandeur of the bulk of the museum's holdings, yet with patience one can imagine how a dancer could animate a costume, and even how other dancers looking on might develop a critical eye. In fact, dance so permeates the imagination of this culture that to be a connoisseur of its art forms is to be attuned to the slightest rhythmic motion—in jacket fringes, pendulous bells, feathers oscillating in the breeze. One of the highlights of the museum's collection is a sixteen-foot-long, double-tailed Sioux warbonnet, containing seventy-two golden-eagle feathers. As a placard notes, it was made to crown a warrior in battle, and "has its greatest beauty when worn on horseback"—in a dance of death, you might say.

**PILAR RIOJA**—Classical Spanish and flamenco dance. Included on the program are four new works: "Danzas" and "Danza Nueva," based on classical court dance, and "Soleá" and "Tener La Esperanza," which combine modern dance and flamenco. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Sept. 17-21 and Sept. 24-25, all at 8; and Sept. 22 at 3. Through Sept. 29.)

**AMERICAN INDIAN DANCE THEATRE**—A troupe of twenty-five dancers and musicians in a three-week engagement. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Sept. 17-20 and Sept. 24-25, all at 8; Sept. 21 at 2 and 8; and Sept. 22 at 2 and 7:30. Through Oct. 6.)

**KULINTANG ARTS**—A California-based group presents dance/music pieces that integrate traditional Filipino and contemporary elements. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Sept. 20-21 at 8 and Sept. 22 at 3.)

**MOISEYEV DANCE COMPANY**—Opening performances of a three-week engagement. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Sept. 24 at 7:30 and Sept. 25 at 8. Through Oct. 13.)



## NIGHT LIFE

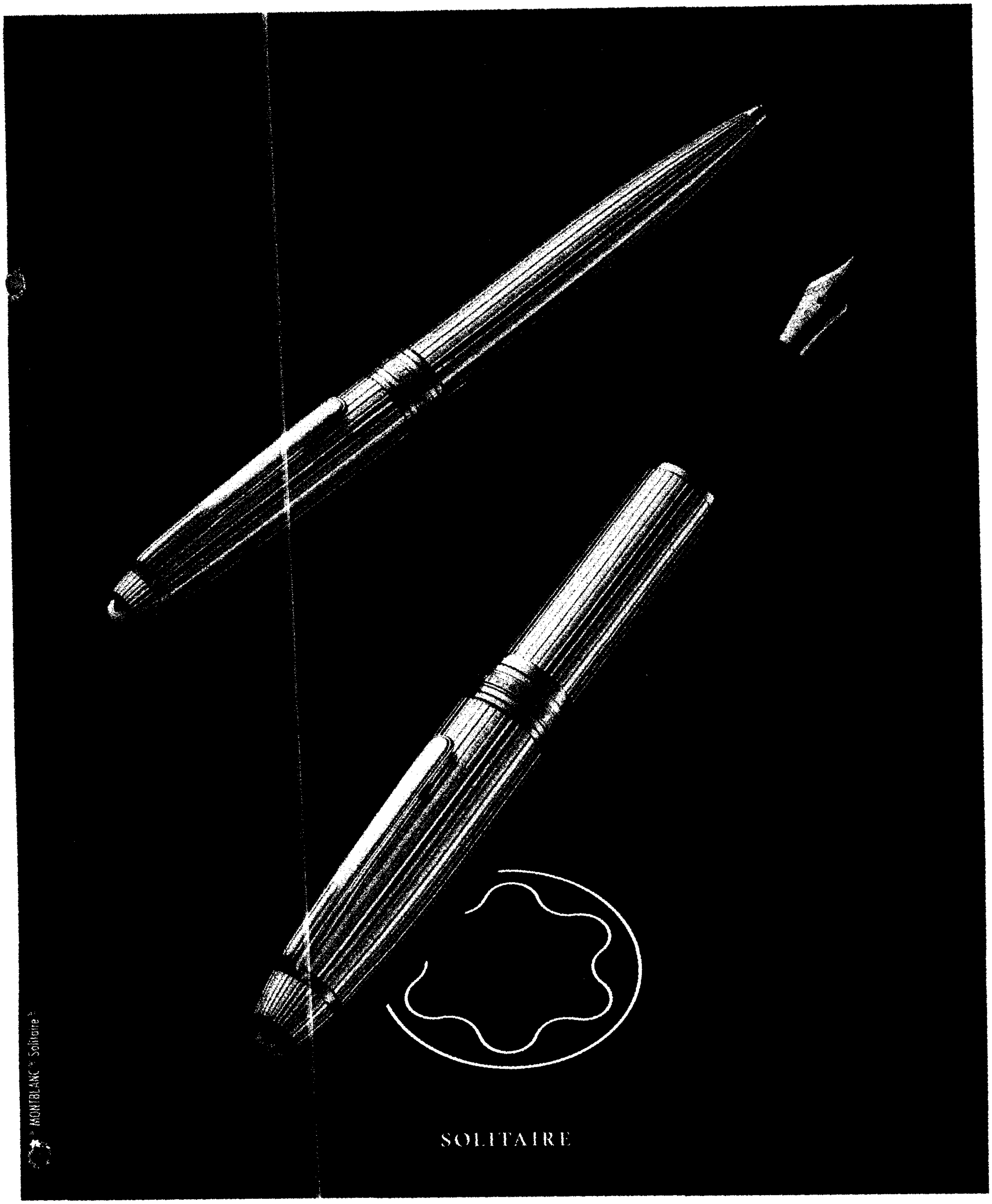
FEW things in life are as certain as the fact that whenever Tony Bennett performs he will sing "I Left My Heart in San Francisco, " and sing it as if he had never sung it before. Now, we are well aware that after forty years in show business Bennett could pretend he was having a good time onstage even if he wasn't. Still, as often as we have seen him perform in recent years, we can't help thinking that he is on the level, that his whole show comes from that well-mapped region known as the heart. The wide, unabashed smiles. The blown kisses. The outstretched arms. The exclamations of "Great stuff, great stuff—now that was *great* stuff."

Bennett's shows—he'll be performing with the Ralph Sharon trio at the Blue Note September 24-29—are not padded with cloying patter, jokey medleys, or endless exit and entrance themes. One gets the singer and the songs. As for the singer, Bennett's voice has taken on a deeper, grainier tone over the years, but he is still the same nimble, jubilant Tony Bennett. (*Anyone who's heard him* sing an a-cappella number at Carnegie Hall knows that, unlike some of his peers, he could have made his living before the invention of the microphone.) As for the songs, ninety-odd records makes for a vast catalogue to choose from, though a recent out-of-town show included "I Wish I Were in Love Again," "Taking a Chance on Love," "I Love a Piano," and, needless to say, that ode to the city by the bay.

Having said this much, we must add that it will probably be awfully hard to get tickets to the Blue Note shows. (We suspect, in fact, that Greenwich Village is in for a week of gridlock.) One could get angry about this or one could content oneself with the four-disk Bennett retrospective that Columbia released a few months back. The boxed set covers everything from the swaggering, operatic 1950 hit "The Boulevard of Broken Dreams" to the soaring "When Do the Bells Ring for Me?," which Bennett recorded in 1989. And if you're in the market for something less daunting, Columbia released an extraordinary single-disk collection called "Jazz" in 1987.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

**ALGONQUIN HOTEL**, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—The Oak Room has finally awoken from its long summer sleep, and as of Sept. 24 it will be home to **SUSANNAH MC CORKLE**. The jazz-pop singer has come up with an entirely new show since she was last seen here, in De-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cember—a tribute to Manhattan singers and songs called "Autumn in New York." Shows at nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

**Ballroom,** 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A tony cabaret attained by passing through an opulent tapas restaurant, where wicker baskets overflow with fruit and vegetables and a row of hams hang over the bar; if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. Pianist-singer-composer **DAVE FRISHBERG,** author of such hip cabaret standards as "Peel Me a Grape" and "My Attorney Bernie," is on hand Sept. 17-22. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen.

**Bitter End,** 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—For the price of a drink or two, you can catch a handful of bands here any night of the week. (The cover charge is mostly a formality—walk along Bleecker Street and you're sure to have a free pass handed to you.) In the old days, as a mural behind the bar attests, the club hosted the likes of Bob Dylan, Linda Ronstadt, and Joni Mitchell. Now you're not likely to recognize anyone onstage unless you went to high school with them. Music from eight Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine on Fridays and Saturdays.

**Blue Note,** 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A jazz club that would be a perfect stop on a bus tour (there's even a souvenir shop that sells Kodak). It's a good idea to make a reservation and show up well in advance. **DIANNE REEVES** is here Sept 17-22, and **TONY BENNETT** begins a week long engagement on Sept. 24. First set begins at nine. Dining.

**Bottom Line,** 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone cries uncle. The walls and columns are basic black with some rainbow detailing here and there—the place looks a little like the outside of a van. If you end up without a seat, you can stand at the bar—finally a club where they don't force you to drink—and mull over photographs from great shows you've missed. "Partridge Family" fans take note: **DAVID CASSIDY** and **DANNY BONADUCE** are appearing on Sept. 23. Cassidy is on the comeback trail—if Donny can do it, why can't he?—whereas Bonaduce, who's trying his hand at standup comedy, has lately been in the public eye more for his offstage performances. Shows at eight and eleven. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

**Bradley's,** 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar in the heart of N.Y.U. country. It's advisable to get all your talking done between sets, because once the first chord is struck the audience here—with a little help from the management—becomes as quiet as a church congregation. An exceptional trio consisting of the pianist **JOHN HICKS,** the bassist **WALTER BOOKER,** and the young trumpeter **ROY HARGROVE** will be performing here through Sept. 21; pianist **KIRK LIGHTSEY** leads a trio as of Sept. 23. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

**Carlyle Hotel,** Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and **BARBARA COOK** (with her accustomed pianist, Wally Harper). Ms. Cook, a Broadway star from the fifties and sixties, launched her cabaret career in the mid-seventies. She's a highly trained soprano with a sweeping range and exceptional control, and she has earned raves for both small-ensemble work and Carnegie Hall-size affairs. Sets at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans' Bar, the pianist-vocalist **RONNY WHYTE** presides at the piano from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

**Condon's,** 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—Jazz clubs aren't always known for their romantic atmosphere, but Condon's earns higher marks than most. It's a low-ceilinged basement establishment, with lemon walls and abundant candlelight. They rearranged the furniture here a while back, so that now a greater number of people look at the stage rather than at a pole. Drummer **LOUIE BELLSON,** whose forty-odd-year career has included stints with Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, and other big-band greats, leads a quintet here Sept 17-22. Music after nine.

**Eagle Tavern,** 355 W. 14th St. (924-0275)—An Irish pub in the meat-packing district, not too far from the boondocks. Not long ago, the Tavern's country-and-bluegrass program was cut, but the Friday-night Irish series remains in place. **PADDY KEENAN** and **PAT KILBRIDE** will be here on Sept. 20. Keenan is an uilleann-pipes player of impeccable standing. Kilbride, his longtime musical companion, works out on the cittern and the guitar, and sings the songs of County Kildare. Music begins at nine.

**Fat Tuesday's,** 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—The seating arrangement in this long, narrow, red-velvet-and-mirror-walled basement makes flying coach seem roomy; nevertheless, it's one of the city's top jazz spots—thanks largely to the club's talent bookers. But watch your head. The imposing tenor saxophonist **JOE HENDERSON** and his group—**KENNY BARRON, RUFUS REID,** and **AL FOSTER**—are in action through Sept. 22. Henderson made a name for himself as a hard-bopper in the sixties, recording a string of influential records for Blue Note, but his style incorporates diverse influences, and is ultimately his own. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

**J's,** 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An Upper West Side jazz room, one steep flight up from the hurly-burly. Jazz people are on the premises nightly, except Sundays, when a jukebox lights up. **MIKE RENZI'S** quartet is in on Sept. 19, followed by **KEN PEPLOWSKI'S** foursome on Sept. 20, **CARLA WHITE'S** group on Sept. 21, and **STAN RUBIN'S** band on Sept. 22. Music from eight-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

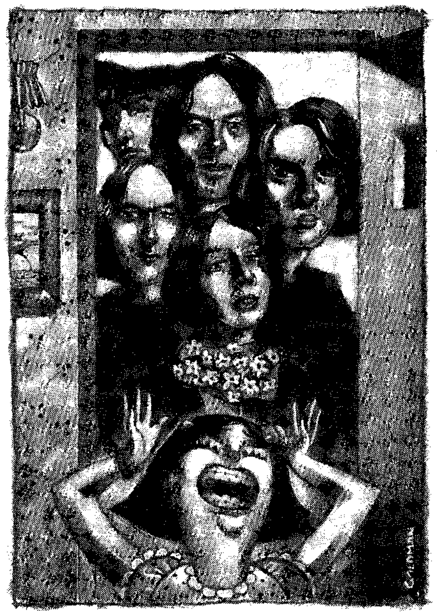
**Knickerbocker,** 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, a menu full of items like bangers-and-mash, and a piano. Knickerbocker's is an airy, good-spirited place, and, while music often takes a back seat to conversation, some able piano-and-bass teams turn up regularly. **RUSS KASSOFF** and **LINC MILLIMAN** are here Sept. 18-21, and **GEOFF KEEZER** and **DWAYNE BURNOT** perform Sept. 25-28. Music from nine-forty-five.

**Manny's Car Wash,** 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—A bright spot on the little-heralded Upper East Side club scene. In the fifties, **LUTHER (GUITAR JUNIOR) JOHNSON,** like many bluesmen before and since, emigrated from the Deep South to Chicago, where he became a potentate on the West Side music scene. He rose to wider fame in the seventies, when he joined up with Muddy Waters (a relationship that lasted for several years), and began leading his own groups in the eighties. You can catch him here on Sept. 19. Sets from nine-fifteen, except on Sundays, when shows begin at eight.

**Marquee,** 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—The current front-runner on the alternative-music scene. The **WONDERSTUFF** is here on Sept. 19, and **ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES IN THE DARK,** a Liverpool group notable for its influential, moody synth-pop of the early eighties, performs on Sept. 20.

**Maxwell's,** 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—A plain-blue back room whose far wall is decorated with round things: a Frisbee, some singles, a drum head, and the woofer from a speaker cabinet, to name a few. The beer of choice here is Rolling Rock—by a landslide—and the crowd may make you feel as if you have a midterm to study for, but many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. **CHAPTERHOUSE,** which will be here on Sept. 22, is a young, airy, sixties-ish pop band hailing from Reading, England. (By now, so many bands dip into psychedelia that the term "sixties-ish" really should be changed to "late-eighties-ish" or "early-nineties-ish.") The group recently released its début record, and things are starting to heat up for them,. Shows at ten on Thursdays, and at eleven on Fridays and Saturdays.

**Michael's Pub,** 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A midtown restaurant and jazz lair for the tasselled-loafers set. **MEL TORMÉ'S** well-preserved, pop-jazz baritone can currently be heard here, backed up by a quintet. Because Tormé can always bring 'em in, the club is usually so packed with tables that patrons barely have room to swivel their heads. It gets harder and harder for clubgoers to live in the past. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-fifteen, Fridays and Saturdays at eight-forty-five and eleven-fifteen, and Sundays at seven-thirty.



*Chapterhouse, at Maxwell's*

**Rainbow & Stars,** 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A great, pricey cabaret high in the sky. **JULIE WILSON,** who is currently in residence, has been a celebrated figure on the cabaret scene since the nineteen-fifties. Onstage, she's a striking figure—thin, elegant, given to wearing boas and tucking a gardenia behind one ear. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Mondays.

**Ritz,** 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This decaying theatre was once the famous Studio 54, where the late Steve Rubell's henchmen helped popularize the policy of turning away the unbeautiful. Now it's the home of one of the city's biggest, oldest, and loudest rock clubs, which was formerly housed in a decaying ballroom in the East Village. The club features a broad stage, mobile-home-size speakers, plenty of room to shimmy, and, for the sedentary, a gigantic Big Brother video screen. The **DAMNED** perform on Sept. 20. Since the late seventies, when the band was perched somewhere near the top of the British punk scene, they've had a rocky history, with several restructurings and a patchy studio output. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

**Russian Tea Room,** 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—A year ago, after a long slumber, the Tea Room's small, red-gold-and-green cabaret reopened with a series of performances. Its second season begins on Sept. 22, with a show featuring the apparently immortal **HILDEGARDE.** A performer for seventy-one years, Hildegarde continues to be charming and chatty—absolutely *fabulous,* to slip into cabaretspeak. She refers to her audiences as "my dear people"; she announces her own solos by chirping "Take it away, girl"; she spins yarns; and she teeters about the stage with an endearing, little-old-lady shtick. Shows at eight and ten-thirty. Dining and, of course, drinking.

**Sounds of Brazil,** 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut dedicated to such things as calypso, reggae, and bossa nova. S.O.B.'s dance floor is always jumping with Rastas and N.Y.U. students, and there's always someone onstage shouting "Put your hands in de air!" Afro-pop star **PAPA WEMBA,** whose new album, "Le Voyageur," will be released in the States in early October, will be holding forth here on Sept. 18. **MIKATA** appears on Sept. 20; **JUDY MOWATT** is here on Sept. 21; and the **AVERAGE WHITE BAND** comes in on Sept. 25. Music from nine-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and from eleven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

**Sweet Basil,** 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. The **ANDREW HILL** sextet is in session through Sept. 22; the **DON GROLNICK** quintet starts up on Sept. 24. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

**SWEETWATERS,** 170 Amsterdam Ave., at 67th St. (873-4100)—Pink carnations on the tables, shrimp creole on the menu, and a sunken dance floor with a circa-1975 mirrored disco ball. The stage, dominated by a white grand piano, is usually given over to soul and R. & B. acts. The **STYLISTICS,** a "Philadelphia sound" outfit that had a string of hits in the mid-seventies ("You Make Me Feel Brand New," "People Make the World Go Round"), is here Sept. 20-21. Shows at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty.

**VILLAGE VANGUARD,** 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." **TERENCE BLANCHARD'S** quintet is in action through Sept. 22; **JOHNNY GRIFFIN'S** foursome gets rolling on Sept. 24. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays. Music after nine-thirty.

**WETLANDS,** 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room; buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad. **KING MISSILE,** who'll be here on Sept. 19, are a New York-based alternative band whose fourth record, "The Way to Salvation," recently went to the top of the college-radio charts. The group started up in the early eighties, growing out of You Suck, a collective of which singer John Hall says, "The idea was to make a really lousy, lame band that people would yell at and throw shit at." Shows from ten.

### EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

SUNDAY evening at the beach usually means heartfelt good-bye kisses to the poor suckers who must work nine to five, sighs of relief for having survived another forty-eight hours of non-stop multiple idiosyncrasy, a quick once-over with a blow-dryer and the Interplak, and then a lively sprint to the nearest teatime/happy hour to dish the weekend with the other die-hards.

But, as those who honor them are wont to say, "The holidays came early this year." Lo and behold, the Sunday after Labor Day became Erev Rosh Hashanah ("Funny, how some years it comes early, some years it comes late"—Jewish New Year never seems to come on time), giving many observers back-to-back holiday weekends before their summer shares ran out.

Much of Manhattan stops dead for Rosh Hashanah. Seventh Avenue, the theatre district, restaurants—all feel the effect of the Jewish community's priorities. At the beach, changes are noted in other ways, and not simply because teatime is replaced by kiddush. "New Year's doesn't seem the same when you're not sitting next to someone in a mink stole," said the young woman in the cotton playsuit, entering the community-center-turned-beachfront-synagogue. "I never did understand how a holiday that stresses humility always brought out so much jewelry." Yet, while there was little sparkle within the temple, there was much without. For once, urbanites left the call to prayer to find themselves under a vast, clear night sky lit only by stars. No cabs honked for attention, no open Suzuki jeeps with four-way stereo systems turned up to stadium sound levels drowned out the echo of the "Adon 'Olam," which is the last hymn sung. Only the ocean underscored conversation. "For once, I feel small," said the young man in Armani shorts, holding his sneakers and walking along the shore. "It's not so bad." His friends lingered with him for a while, then urged him to shake a leg, as they had holiday-dinner plans at the other end of the beach. "Go ahead, I'll catch up," he said. And then he sat down just short of the surf, and looked up for a long time.

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### PLUMBING

*The Josephine Shaw Lowell fountain, in Bryant Park, has been dry as toast for the past two decades. The western portion of the park, at Sixth Avenue and 42nd Street, reopened several months ago (having been restored, regroomed, and replanted), and now the poor, dysfunctional monument has been given much more responsibility than it can bear. The pink-granite fountain, which looks like a great big empty dessert dish, has to serve as the centerpiece of the park's gorgeous new landscaped alleys and lawns.*

*It won't be long, though, before water flows from the stone. A couple of plumbers from M. Farbman & Co. ("Plumbers to the world," says Tony Luttenberger, the field plumbing supervisor) are currently busy in the crawl space beneath the fountain, installing new pumps and pipes in order to bring the structure's jets and geysers back to life. When the repairs are completed, four- and eight-foot streams of water will shoot into the air and then run into a round, illuminated pool at the fountain's base. The plumbers hope to be finished by the end of the month, but Mr. Luttenberger, who's been working on plumbing systems in New York City for thirty years and knows just how unpredictable the manufacturers of pipes and joints can be, won't make any promises. The project has already been held up for several months. "It's a problem with our society," he says. "Everything is very lax these days." Josephine Shaw Lowell, who made her mark as a social reformer at the end of the last century, would surely have appreciated this sentiment.*

### IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

**ANNIE SPRINKLE**—In her new one-woman show, which is, explicitly, about sex. (Sanford Meisner Theatre, 164 Eleventh Ave., at 22nd St. 206-1764. Sept. 17-20 at 8, Sept. 21 at 7 and 10:30, and Sept. 22 at 7:30.)

**"BRACE UP!"**—A presentation by the Wooster Group, with music, video, and performance. (Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. 966-3651. Thursdays through Sundays at 8.)

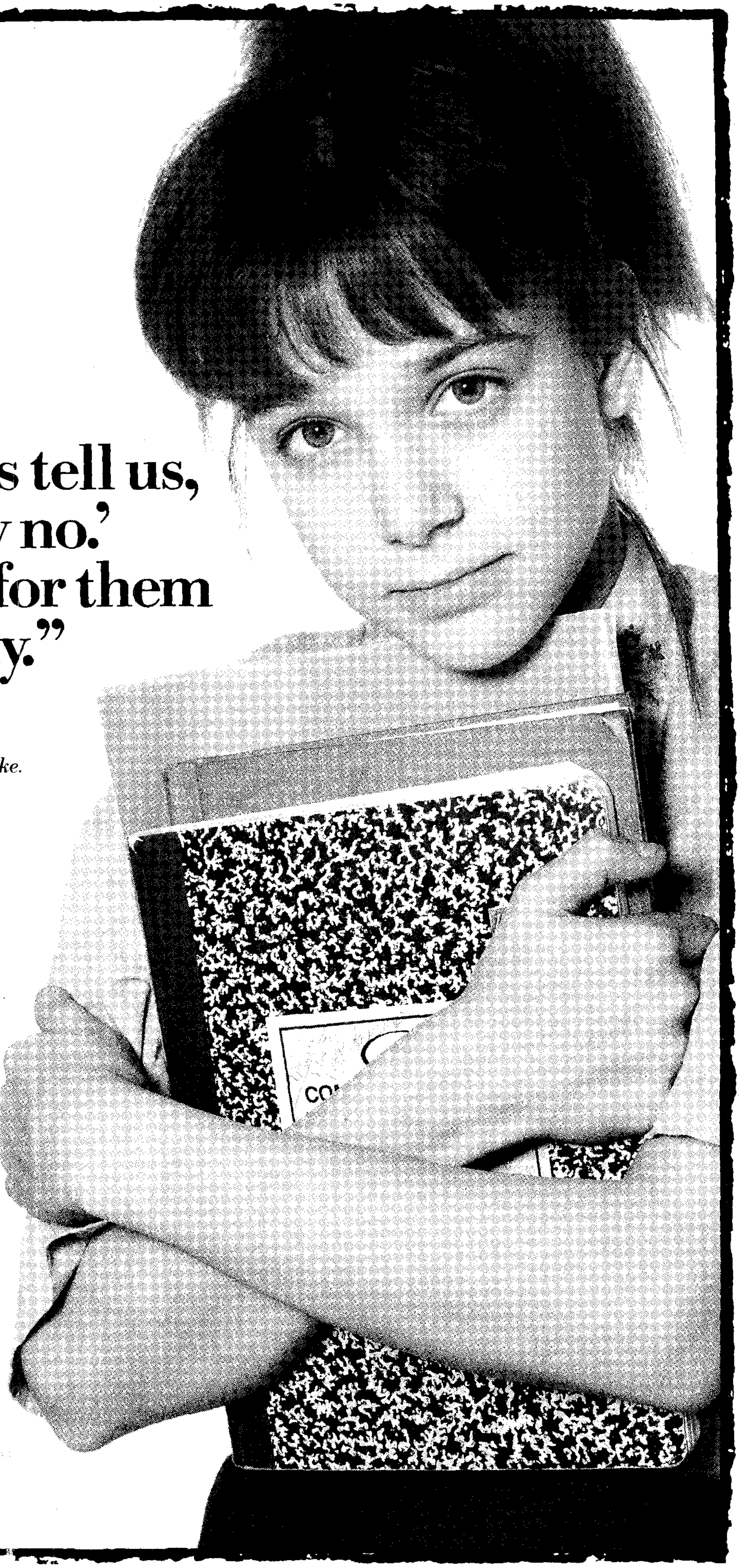
**"WICHIKAPACHE GOES WALKING"**—A play, with masks, by the Mettawee River Company. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 92[illegible]-4777. Sept. 20-21 at 7:30, and Sept. 22 a[illegible] and 7:30.)

**P.S. 122**—Sept. 19-20 at 8: Storytellers Na'Imah Hasan and Rae C. Wright. . . . ¶ Sept. 19-22 at 9: Nina Martin in "It's Only a Game, Isn't It?". . . ¶ Sept. 21-22 at 8: Shelly Mars presents "In the Mirror."(150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

## ART

NANCY GROSSMAN's retrospective at Exit Art (578 Broadway; through October 12) unofficially launched the new season in an art world that is promising to behave, at least for a while, as if the eighties had never happened. The crowd at Grossman's opening, for starters, looked like a casting call for one of Otto Preminger's parties: radical intellectuals and Living Theatre types, laced with a healthy number of unreconstructed sexpots of both sexes who tended to have either a whole lot of hair or none at all. It was as if the whole gathering had been in some sort of holding pen for the past fifteen years, and had suddenly been released intact upon the scene. Grossman's art, too, like the people it attracted, managed to look deeply familiar, though it hadn't very recently been on view.

Grossman, however, was quite prominent through the seventies, when her S & M carved heads in seamed-and-zippered-leather bondage masks were high-cult items. These icons of sexual license—they seem so naïve today, almost sweet—furthermore provided a missing art-historical link in a lineup that might start with, say, the work of Oskar Schlemmer, proceed to Richard Lindner, and culminate in some of Robert Mapplethorpe's erotica. Grossman is still making these fetishistic heads, and several of them, old ones as well as recent ones, are included in this show. But they are only one part of this artist's oeuvre. Grossman's work—sculptures, combines, collages, and reliefs, mostly made up of such stuff as distressed leather, shoe parts, and lacings—is derived from Abstract Expressionism, from European *Nouveau Réalisme*, and from certain hybrids of these two strains, which slightly preceded Grossman's mid-sixties beginnings: Lee Bontecou here leaps to mind. Grossman's show looks wonderful, at once a period piece and as fresh as a daisy. This should prove to be a big season for this artist, who next month will have another show, at the Sculpture Center, then yet another, at Long Island University's Hillwood Art Museum.



"Grown-ups tell us, 'Just say no.' That's easy for them to say."

*"Maybe they forgot what it's like.*

*"At parties, at school, kids are saying to try this or do that, and they're my friends. I mean how many times can I hear I'm a loser.*

*"Sure I'm scared of drugs. It's just there's so much pressure. You want to say no. But you can take a lot of heat for it."*

Simple yes-no decisions aren't so simple when they involve kids and drugs.

That's why IBM has helped develop a computer-based, interactive video program that's now in schools. It simulates realistic social situations, allowing kids to make choices—about drugs and alcohol—and to experience the consequences, but without getting hurt.

The program is sponsored by the National Federation of State High School Associations, and results have been extremely encouraging. To learn more about this program, write to us at IBM,
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*Robert Smithson*

## MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

**Metropolitan Museum,** Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Neo-Impressionism: The Friends and Followers of Georges Seurat," a kind of appetizer before the main course (the Seurat show opens next week), consists of eighty-eight paintings, drawings, and watercolors by such artists as Paul Signac, Camille Pissarro, and Henri Matisse. . . . ¶ The exhibition of the Annenberg Collection begins with some exquisite small works by Fantin-Latour, followed by two rooms, devoted to Monet, van Gogh, Gauguin, and Cézanne, that include some of the collection's finest works, such as Monet's "Poppy Field, Argenteuil" (1875), Gauguin's "The Siesta" (1892-94), and Cézanne's "The House with the Cracked Walls" (1892-94). Farther on are some very good early-twentieth-century works, including Picasso's haunting "At the Lapin Agile" (1905), an important but somewhat overwrought Vuillard, a beautiful Matisse, and a very pretty Bonnard. Through Oct. 13. . . . **note:** The museum's roof garden, planted with nine sculptures by Rodin, is open when the weather permits. Through Oct. 27. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

**Museum of Modern Art,** 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibition of works by Guillermo Kuitca—including house plans, paintings of beds, and road maps painted on mattresses—is the latest in the "Projects" series. Through Oct. 29. . . . ¶ "Nudes," a show of fifty photographs by Lee Friedlander taken over the past twelve years. Through Oct. 8. . . . ¶ A small show of posters, catalogues, ads, and magazine covers by the Swiss graphic designer Herbert Matter (1907-84). Through Dec. 3. . . . ¶ Thirteen videotapes made with "low-end" video equipment by artists such as William Wegman, Linda Montano, George Kuchar, and Sadie Benning. Through Nov. 10. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

**Guggenheim Museum,** Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until early 1992.

**Whitney Museum of American Art,** Madison Ave. at 75th St.— Among the punchiest and freshest-looking paintings in "American Life in American Art" are Paul Cadmus's flamboyantly tawdry "Sailors and Floosies" (1938); Grant Wood's subtly colored triptych "Study for Breaking the Prairie" (1935-39); and George Tooker's creepy and hilarious "The Subway" (1950). . . . ¶ A retrospective of John Baldessari's work that has been organized into eight loosely chronological, didactically labelled rooms. Through Oct. 20. . . . ¶ A retrospective of the work of the long-neglected decorative artist Hunt Diederich (1884-1953). Through Sept. 29. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

**Brooklyn Museum,** Eastern Parkway—A thirty-foot-long platform of forged-iron sculptures is the fifteenth installment in Alain Kirili's "Commandment" series. Starts Sept. 20. . . . ¶ "Quattrocento," a small exhibition of a few dozen early-Renaissance panel paintings from Italy, shows off another of the many fine corners of the museum's vast collection. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

**American Museum of Natural History,** Central Park W. at 79th St.—"The Way to Independence," a show of more than five hundred artifacts dealing with the upheaval endured by three generations of Hidatsa Indians and their eventual relocation to a reservation called Independence. Through Nov. 3. . . . ¶ Thirty-five large-format color photographs of endangered North American fish, including lampreys, mud minnows, shiners, and trout. Through Sept. 22. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

**American Craft Museum,** 40 W. 53rd St.—"Frank Lloyd Wright: Preserving an Architectural Heritage" is a show of more than seventy pieces of furniture, art-glass windows, lights, and other decorative objects spanning sixty years of the artist's career. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday and Friday evenings until 8.)

**Grolier Club,** 47 E. 60th St.—An exhibition of more than a hundred and twenty-five books, posters, prints, and drawings by a little-known fin-de-siècle group called Les Incohérents. Through Nov. 23. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

**Jewish Museum,** at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Painting a Place in America: Jewish Artists in New York, 1900-45." An exhibition that leaves the viewer with primarily an impression of second-rate, labored art—the essentially boring heaviness of urban social realism. But there are a few delightful discoveries, including a witty, Cubistic 1915 portrait of Marsden Hartley by Ben Benn, and a mythical, Old World circus scene by Benjamin Kopman, with shades of Chagall, Ensor, and Marc. Through Sept. 29. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 3. Closed Sept. 18 and Sept. 24.)

**National Academy of Design,** Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The French children's-book character Babar the Elephant travels to New York in the form of more than a hundred drawings and watercolors by Jean de Brunhoff, the character's creator, and his son Laurent, who has continued the stories. Starts Sept. 19. . . . ¶ In the exhibition "Illustrating Nature: The Art of Botany," the New York Botanical Garden's collection is represented by ninety-five watercolors, pen-and-ink drawings, books, and dried plant specimens. Through Oct. 20. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

**The New Museum,** 583 Broadway—"The Interrupted Life" is about that all too permanent interruption: death. Forty-two artists have contributed work in all mediums. Among those represented are David Wojnarowicz, Sarah Charlesworth, Donald Moffett, and Kiki Smith. Through Dec. 29. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

**New-York Historical Society,** 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—Forty watercolors of New York and New Jersey landscapes by William Rickarby Miller (1818-93). Through Nov. 17. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 5.)

**New York Public Library,** Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Documents of Dissent," a show of books, posters, handbills, and journals from China, Tibet, the Soviet Union, the United States, and other countries. Included are the first English translation of "The Gulag Archipelago," the "Black Book of Polish Censorship," and posters by the collaborative group Guerrilla Girls. (Edna Barnes Salomon Room.). . . ¶ A display of recently acquired rare books and manuscripts, including Joseph Conrad's manuscript for "The Secret Sharer" and Washington Irving's for "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." Through Oct. 12. (Berg Collection.) (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

**Queens Museum of Art,** Flushing Meadow Park—Fifty photographs, by Reginald Marsh, that depict New York's subways and Coney Island, and that were used by the artist as studies for his better-known paintings and drawings. Through Nov. 10. . . . ¶ A small show of paintings and works on paper—all of them diptychs—by Candida Alvarez. Through Oct. 12. . . . ¶ Christian Boltanski's mixed-media installation "Les Bougies" ("The Candles") incorporates metal, light fixtures, and mounted photographs. Starts Sept. 19. . . . ¶ "Sylvia Plachy's Unguided Tour" is a collection of a hundred and twenty-five of the photographer's works. Starts Sept. 19. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5.)

## GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

**Short List—georges rouault,** Elysium, 28 E. 78th St. (through Sept. 28); **gretchen dow simpson,** Ryan, 452 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. (through Oct. 12); **don van vliet,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (through Oct. 26).

## GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

**Group Show**—A show of so-called art furniture that focusses on the work of eighteen practitioners of the craft. The pieces, presumably intended to be witty collectibles, are [illegible] by luxury—the playfulness of funk ceramics deadened by an addiction to the most garishly exotic woods and crafty tomfoolery. Through Sept. 20. (Joseph, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays, closed Saturdays.)

**Short List—thomas bang,** Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St. (through Sept. 28); **robert barry,** Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 12); **joan brown,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 23); **john button,** Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 5); **john steuart curry,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (through Sept. 28); **donald judd,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 19); **stephanie kirschen-cole,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through Sept. 26); **john mc laughlin** and **al held,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 12); **george negroponte,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 3); **man ray,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 12).

## GALLERIES-SoHo

**James O. Clark**—This artist makes dense assembled objects that incorporate light in various ways. These strong and evocative works are made of battered, discarded materials that have been caringly combined, as if the artist were putting splints on wounded birds. The most appealing work consists of a squiggle of yellow argon light floating in a helium balloon. Below it are a gas cannister and mechanical apparatuses that rest on lace-edged pillows, giving the work a memorial, though not a macabre, tone. Through Oct. 5. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

**Tom Friedman / Marc Romano**—A funny and somewhat magical exhibition of sculptures that includes a large ball of bubble gum shoved into a corner at mouth level, a rectangle of minty-blue toothpaste, a crumpled sheet of paper with another sheet folded to resemble it, and a mound of cottony pillow stuffing that looks as if it might float away. The works explore issues that were popular in the seventies—fragility, the temporal—but with a new freshness. / Paintings of semi-abstract nature scenes—trees and fields of green. The works are made up not of brushstrokes but of repeated multicolored signatures of "multicultural" men's names, such as Matthew Martinez and Eric Szabo. The paintings explore current social themes, though with minimal depth. Through Sept. 28. (Feature, 484 Broome St.)

**Gilbert & George**—A re-creation of the duo's 1971 exhibition, which included "The Singing Sculpture" and a series of drawings titled "The General Jungle." The former can be witnessed from 3 to 6 P.M., through September 28. Starts Sept. 21. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

**David Kapp**—Traffic in the city is the theme, and perhaps the governing metaphor, of these big, old-fashioned, impastoed, semi-abstract canvases. Kapp's technique is impressive—positively magisterial—and the atmosphere in these works is elegiac. They're just not all that individual. Through Oct. 5. (Beitzel, 102 Prince St.)

**Adam Rolston**—In an attempt to defuse the controversy over condom dissemination, Rolston has turned the gallery into a warehouse for a thousand homemade Trojan-condom boxes—an overt reference to Warhol's Brillo-box sculptures. The boxes are on sale for twenty dollars each. Through Oct 5. (Wessel O'Connor, 580 Broadway.)

**Krzysztof Wodiczko**—The artist has worked closely with New York's homeless for several years and believes that this very public population has been unjustly denied a sense of community and, especially in recent police actions, the kind of access to public spaces that is a right in a democratic society. The centerpiece of his current exhibition is a wheeled vehicle designed for the homeless, which can be configured in three different ways so that it can be walked, ridden, and slept in. He has dubbed his vehicle "Poliscar," an evocation of the Greek word "polis," meaning city-state, and the phrase "police state." The satirically somewhat militaristic-looking felt-panelled vehicle is fitted with a CB radio and other devices intended to enable homeless persons to communicate with one another. While the Poliscar is not as visually arresting as the artist's public light projections, the show includes a number of drawings of Poliscars that convey a dramatic sense of public confrontation. One, for instance, pits a team of Poliscars against a team of police cars with a fervor suggesting warfare. Such a scenario, of course, would set car against bicycle and metal against fabric—a lopsided confrontation indeed. Through Oct. 5. (Baer, 476 Broome St. Open Wednesday until 8.)

**Erwin Wurm**—A series of sculptures. The work includes various articles of clothing stretched over hidden forms, two blankets displayed as if they were levitating, and a vitrine whose patterns of dust suggest that an object which sat there for some time has been removed. Everything rather academically illustrates issues of absence and presence. Through Oct. 12. (Stux, 155 Spring St.)

**Group Show**—Mirrors have been used historically to trick the mind and reflect what would ordinarily not be visible within a picture—works by van Eyck, de la Tour and Velázquez spring to mind in this regard. In our own time, which is fairly obsessed with the self, it would seem that the mirror might offer a variety of avenues down which artists could wander, but judging from the works here, all of which are actual mirrors, the object seems to have lost its aura. A number of the works suffer, perhaps inadvertently, from like-mindedness: Meg Webster's and Laurie Parsons' mirrors are, in this context, simply rectangles of silvered glass, and Günther Förg's domineering, heavy-framed mirror would have more resonance in its usual juxtaposition with his photographs. The show does include some works that make for a bit of variety—one of Jeff Koons' monumentally kitschy and garishly baroque mirrors, for instance, and one of Simon Leung's "mother-of-pearl" mirrors covered with skin from below the artist's left eye. "Untitled (Double Portrait)," a pair of ordinary mirrors by Félix González-Torres, was given richer meaning by its former title, "Untitled (Orpheus Twice)," which transformed the mirrors into memorials to lost love. Works by Robert Smithson, Troy Brauntuch, and Justen Ladda would have broadened this show's scope. Through Oct. 5. (Rosen, 130 Prince St.)

**Short List**—**mary beyt,** Klagsbrun, 51 Greene St. (open Wednesdays until 8, through Oct. 5); **barbara bloom,** Gorney, 100 Greene St. (through Oct. 12); **gandy brodie,** Thorp, 103 Prince St. (through Oct. 12); **bernard chaet,** Pearl, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 1[illegible]); **petah coyne,** Shainman, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 12); **patrick faigenbaum,** Gladstone, 99 Greene St. (through Oct. 12); **brian kazlov,** O. K. Harris, 383 West Broadway (through Oct. 5); **harry kramer,** Cowles, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 26); **arnold mesches,** Donahue, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 12); **zero mostel** and **tobias mostel,** Bustamante, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 5); **jim nutt,** Kind, 136 Greene St. (through Oct. 16); **don pol[illegible]y,** Cutler, 164 Mercer St. (through Sept. 2[illegible]); **harold shapinsky,** Helander, 415 West Broadway (through Oct. 5); **nancy shaver,** Marcus, 578 Broadway (through Oct. 12); **jim shaw,** Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. (through Oct. 12); **jonathan silver,** Munroe, 130 Prince St. (through Oct. 12); **alan sonfist,** LedisFlam, 584 Broadway (through Oct. 12); **ursula von rydingsvärd,** Lorence-Monk, 578 Broadway (through Oct. 26); **rémy zaugg,** Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (open Wednesdays until 8, through Oct. 9).

### OTHER GALLERIES

**Short List**—**robert smithson,** Schermerhorn Hall, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. (opens at 1 Wednesdays through Saturdays, through Oct. 26); **lawrence weiner** and **dan graham,** Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. (opens at noon Thursdays through Sundays, through Feb. 2).

## PHOTOGRAPHY

David Graham's new exhibition (at Laurence Miller, 138 Spring Street; through October 5) includes photographs that capture the "bigger the better" side of the American tradition. His photographs of a restaurant as a giant burger (sesame seeds and all), of a shoe-house, and of a roadside stand topped by a humongous doughnut are all uncondescending celebrations of American entrepreneurship. While Graham's observations and appreciations are not groundbreaking—there are many precedents for this kind of vision, from the work of Walker Evans to Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown through the Pop artists—his color photographs are amusing and sweet enough to reinvigorate this well-trodden artistic territory. Not all of Graham's images of American sights (most of them taken in the eighties) are about scaling things up. Some of his photographs depict miniaturization. These turn out to be witty metaphors for the present: for example, the pictures that signify recession, as it were. There's a 1986 shot of a Shriner in a sports car so small it wouldn't even come up to the fellow's knees. (A book of Graham's photographs, "Only in America: Some Unexpected Scenery," with an introduction by Jane and Michael Stern, has just been published by Knopf.)

**Mary Ellen Mark**—Mark is a genuinely humane photographer, and her photographs of the effects of poverty on people's lives, and her portraits of individuals who are in confinement for various reasons, are strong because they are all different. She doesn't try to generalize, but instead makes careful and respectful images of individual subjects. Through Nov. 17. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

**Short List**—**e. j. bellocq,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through Oct. 5); **robert capa,** International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8, through Nov. 17); **lynn davis,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 12); **annie leibovitz,** International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8, through Dec. 1); **david levinthal,** Borden, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 5); **jim long,** Wessel O'Connor, 580 Broadway (through Oct. 5); **david salle,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 12); **sandy skoglund,** P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway (through Sept. 28); **joel sternfeld,** Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 19); **jerry uelsmann,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (open Wednesdays until 8, through Oct. 19); **oliver wasow,** Baer, 476 Broome St. (open Wednesdays until 8, through Oct. 5); **robert yarber,** Lieberman & Saul, 155 Spring St. (through Oct. 12).

## MUSIC

Twenty-five years ago, the present Metropolitan Opera House (the "New Met," as it was called until most operagoers forgot about the old one) opened at Lincoln Center with a new opera—Samuel Barber's "Antony and Cleopatra," in a lavish production by Franco Zeffirelli. The score was received with a certain amount of approbation, if not enthusiasm; the

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staging was almost universally panned. That, at least, was the critical reaction. The Met itself has emitted nary a chirp that we can recall about plans to revive the score that opened the house (it has been left for the newly adventurous Chicago Lyric Opera to do that), and has done precious little recent opera of any sort, whereas Mr. Zeffirelli has been back again and again to propound his decorative understanding of the art form. The silver-anniversary season that is about to begin includes four Zeffirelli productions and only two operas composed within the last sixty-five years. But one of these is actually a new opera: "The Ghosts of Versailles," by John Corigliano (to a libretto by the poet-playwright William M. Hoffman). And if the Met's promotional materials suggest that the work will wear its accessibility on its sleeve, perhaps that is a pardonable over-correction in a sphere where not too long ago forbidding severity was worn, just as inappropriately, as a badge of honor. We note the introduction of "The Ghosts" with hopeful pleasure, and we note also a modest but perceptible increase this season in the number of singers under age fifty-five, whom we look forward to hearing in the roles for which they are announced.

We like the idea of the celebratory opening gala (September 23)—acts from each of three operas, calculated to recall evenings recorded in the Old Met Annals when the audience could follow a bit of Ponselle and Martinelli with a bit of Flagstad and Melchior. The gala features both Placido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti. The tickets still available when the season brochure went to press were three hundred and fifty dollars and seven hundred and fifty dollars apiece, which makes us stop and think. James Levine will conduct, and the program will include Act III of "Otello," Act III of "Rigoletto," and Act II of "Die Fledermaus" (a party scene with additional operatic luminaries).

## OPERA

**METROPOLITAN OPERA**—Opening performances of the season, which will run through April 18. To celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary at Lincoln Center, the company presents staged acts from three operas: Act III of "Rigoletto" (with Cheryl Studer, Luciano Pavarotti, and Leo Nucci); Act III of "Otello" (with Mirella Freni, Placido Domingo, and Justino Díaz); and Act II of "Die Fledermaus" (with Barbara Daniels, Barbara Kilduff, Anne Sofie von Otter, Hermann Prey, and—as is traditional in galas—a succession of surprise guests to sing songs at Prince Orlofsky's merry gathering). Conducted by James Levine. (Sept. 23 at 7.). . . **DON GIOVANNI,** with Carolyn James, Judith Forst, Ruth Ann Swenson, Stanford Olsen, Ferruccio Furlanetto, Timothy Noble, Julien Robbins, and Kurt Moll; James Levine. (Sept. 24 at 8.). . . **UN BALLO IN MASCHERA,** with Leona Mitchell, Sumi Jo, Stefania Toczyska, Peter Dvorsky, and Sherrill Milnes; Thomas Fulton. (Sept. 25 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

**NEW YORK CITY OPERA**—**THE MOST HAPPY FELLA,** Frank Loesser's vintage-1956 Broadway musical about problematic liaisons in the California wine country, which made history by expanding its genre to nearly operatic dimensionss. With Elizabeth Walsh, Karen Ziémba, Elaine Bonazzi, Louis Quilico, Burke Moses, Lara Teeter, and Arthur Rubin; conducted by Chris Nance. (Sept. 18 at 8.). . . With Michele McBride, Joanna Glushak, Susanne Marsee, John Fiorito, John Leslie Wolfe, Brian Quinn, and Arthur Rubin; Chris Nance. (Sept. 21 at 8.). . . **LE NOZZE DI FIGARO,** with Elizabeth Hynes, Maureen O'Flynn, Kathryn Gamberoni, Dean Peterson, and William Stone; Scott Bergeson. (Sept. 19 and Sept. 25 at 8.). . . **DIE TOTE STADT,** a revival of the early masterpiece by the precocious Erich Wolfgang Korngold. (He wrote it at the age of twenty, long before leaving Vienna for Hollywood, where he would compose scores for such films as "The Sea Hawk," "The Sea Wolf," and "King's Row.") With Stephanie Sundine, Robynne Redmon, John Absalom, and Richard Byrne; George Manahan. (Sept. 20 at 8.). . . **CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA** and **PAGLIACCI,** with RoseMarie Freni, Bronwyn Thomas, and Vincenzo Scuderi (in the former); and Pamela South, Antonio Barasorda, and Sigmund Cowan (in the latter); Richard Bradshaw conducting both. (Sept. 21 at 2.). . . **MADAME BUTTERFLY,** with Eva Zseller, Susanne Marsee, Rick Moon, and William Stone; Chris Nance. (Sept. 22 at 2.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

**"LE TEMPLE DE LA GLOIRE"**—The New York Baroque Dance Company and Concert Royal present the first known performance since 1746 of Rameau's *opéra-ballet.* A paean to Louis XV on the occasion of the victory of Fontenoy (to a text by Voltaire, no less), the work had premièred the previous year, at Versailles. James Richman directs the musicians, and Catherine Turocy oversees the dancers in this fully staged production. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. Sept. 19-21 at 8 and Sept. 22 at 3.)

**AMATO OPERA COMPANY**—Presenting "The Marriage of Figaro." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Sept. 21 at 7:30 and Sept. 22 at 2:30.)

## ORCHESTRAS

**NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC**—Leonard Slatkin conducts three symphonies: Walton's First, Barber's First, and Haydn's Sixtieth. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Sept. 19, Sept. 21, and Sept. 24, all at 8, and Sept. 20 at 2.)

**PRISM**—Robert Black conducts the chamber orchestra in the première of "The Riverfisher," a 1989 work for soloists and orchestra by Rick Baitz (with soprano Christine Schadeberg and mezzo-soprano Janice Edwards); three pieces by Dinos Constantinides (including a duo for percussion and harp, and another for percussion and saxophone); Arvo Pärt's "Fratres," performed by Mary Rowell (violin) and Mr. Black (piano); and Stravinsky's "Dumbarton Oaks" Concerto. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Sept. 16 at 8.)

**MANHATTAN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA**—Richard Auldon Clark conducts a program that includes the New York première of David Amram's "Variations on an American Folk Tune," for flute and strings (the folk tune in question being "Red River Valley"); the "Concerto for Piano and Synthesizer" by Howard Cass (who teaches electronic music at Juilliard, and will here perform the solo parts of both instruments); and two pieces by Jacques Ibert: his sparkling, neoclassical Flute Concerto (with Eugenia Zukerman as soloist) and his "Elizabethan Suite" (which was written in 1942 for a production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and includes arrangements of compositions by Bull, Byrd, Gibbons, and Purcell). (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Sept. 18 at 8.)

**SAITO KINEN ORCHESTRA**—In the opening concert of Carnegie Hall's second century, Seiji Ozawa conducts the Japanese orchestra (founded in 1984 as an ensemble of students and colleagues of the late music educator Hideo Saito) in a Mozart divertimento, Bartók's First Violin Concerto (with soloist Isaac Stern), and Brahms' Second Symphony. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Sept. 24 at 7:30.)

## RECITALS

**ELLEN ORNER**—Violinist, performing Bartók's Solo Violin Sonata, as well as the New York premières of unaccompanied works by the Spanish composer Cristobal Halffter and the Canadian composer Harry Somers. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Sept. 16 at 8.)

**BARGEMUSIC**—Presenting chamber music by Kodály, Mozart, and Dvořák. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Sept. 19 at 7:30 and Sept. 22 at 4.)

**ELAINE COMPARONE**—It remains a mystery that Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, the most prolific of Johann Sebastian's brood of twenty, should continue to lack broader popularity among audiences (and, for that matter, among many musicians), despite the potential boost of the bicentennial of his death three years ago. Ms. Comparone, a harpsichordist, will argue his case by performing sonatas, fantasies, and rondos from his later years, works that the composer indicated were destined for both "*Kenner und Liebhafer*"—that is, for connoisseurs as well as amateurs. Both should be impressed by the music's impeccable craftsmanship, range of expression, and striking individuality. (Weill Recital Hall. 247-7800. Sept. 19 at 8.)

**KUMI OGANO**—In her New York début, the pianist performs Chopin's four ballades (plus one by Fauré), the first book of Debussy's Études, and three pieces by Toru Takemitsu (whose works she has recently championed in concert and on recordings). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Sept. 19 at 8.)

**MANHATTAN STRING QUARTET**—Performing quartets by Beethoven, Shostakovich, and Grażyna Bacewicz. (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. 734-2130. Sept. 22 at 2:45.)

**SI-YO MUSIC SOCIETY**—A concert of three Haydn baryton trios and Mendelssohn's C-Minor Piano Trio, performed by violinist Ma Si-Hon, violist David Miller, baryton player John Hsu, cellists Jerry Grossman and Loretta O'Sullivan, and pianist Tung Kwong-Kwong. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. Sept. 22 at 3.)

**FOUR NATIONS ENSEMBLE**—The period-instrument players embark on a season-long "musical grand tour" of Europe, with their first stop being Paris (later "visits" will feature Vienna, Leipzig, and Madrid). In this concert, harpsichordist Andrew Appel performs solo works by two Couperins (Louis and his nephew François, "le Grand") and Rameau. Violinist Ryan Brown assists him in a sonata by Jean-Joseph Casséa de Mondonville, and cellist Loretta O'Sullivan joins both for a trio by Johann Schobert. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Sept. 25 at 8.). . . **NOTE:** On Sept. 24 at 8, also at Merkin Concert Hall, Mr. Appel will be joined by harpsichordist James Richman and harpsichord builders Willard Martin and John Koster to discuss and demonstrate the instrument.

**GINA BACHAUER COMPETITION WINNERS**—The three winners of Juilliard's most recent Gina Bachauer International Piano Scholarship Competition share a recital, each focussing on a discrete area of the piano's repertoire. Myra Choi (from California) performs the "Roman Sketches" of the American Impressionist Charles Tomlinson Griffes; Avner Arad (from Israel) turns to stalwart classics by Mozart and Chopin; and Adrian Oetiker (from Switzerland) goes Russian, with Scriabin's Second Sonata, a Rachmaninoff prelude, and Prokofiev's "Suggestion Diabolique." (Paul Recital Hall, Juilliard School, 60 Lincoln Center Plaza. Sept. 25 at 9. No tickets necessary.)

*Elaine Comparone*

## JAZZ/POP/ROCK
### PERSONAL APPEARANCES

**Grateful Dead**—A Grateful Dead concert is an institution old enough and strangely American enough to warrant an exhibit at the Smithsonian. It's a movable Chautauqua, a portable Mardi Gras, a temporary city where any evening of the week can be the weirdest Saturday night of your life. It's an even bet whether the music will lift off toward ecstasy or meander and noodle through the swamps of repetition, but, either way, the bumper sticker is correct: there is nothing like a Grateful Dead concert. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Sept. 16-18 at 7:30.)

Little Feat, at the Beacon

**Diana Ross**—With most Hollywood stars eschewing the grand manner of a divinely appointed diadem, we still have Miss Ross and her magnetic egotism to remind us of the old way. Her concerts, which hover somewhere between a Vegas headliner's revue and an oldies show, no longer qualify as events—her recent appearance at Jones Beach was not sold out—and one might criticize the supreme Supreme for resting on her laurels. But what laurels they are! (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Sept. 19-21 at 8.)

**Gloria Estefan and Miami Sound Machine**—As everyone in the world must know by now, this tour and Gloria Estefan's new album, "Into the Light," represent the triumphal return of a singer whose career nearly ended a year and a half ago when her back was broken in a bus crash. While Estefan's life has been dramatically full, her music continues to be a delirously empty soufflé of disco, contemporary dance-pop, commercial ballads, and bouncy Latin rhythm. New York is the final stop in a forty-one-city jaunt that began last March in the Cuban-American singer's home town, Miami, and an enthusiastic crossover crowd will be loving every heartwarming, danceable minute of it. (Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. Sept. 21 at 8.)

**Rod Stewart**—So everybody's mum likes him. So what? Stewart is one of rock's most unusual and gifted underachievers (like McCartney). Even though he hasn't made an outstanding album in almost twenty years, his 1990 smash-hit retrospective, "Storyteller," shows that he's been singing some great songs ("The First Cut Is the Deepest"), along with some signature time-capsule tunes ("Da Ya Think I'm Sexy?") that show his ability to ride a fad proudly. His latest record, "Vagabond Heart," is a comeback of sorts, and it's really pretty good. His singing, soulful and lusty, has the warmth and friendliness that have always been his charm. He carries the songs on this record a little roughly but always approachably—as if he were your best bar buddy, partying with you. There's no doubt that Rod the Bod has been around awhile, but he wears his years well. Cheers (Meadowlands Arena. Sept. 24 and Sept. 26-27 at 8.)

**Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra**—Carnegie Hall 247-7800. Sept. 20 at 8.

**Geri Allen**—Winter Garden, World Financial Center, Battery Park City. Sept. 21 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.

**Shahram Nazeri**—Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Sept. 21 at 8 and Sept. 22 at 7:30.

**Little Feat**—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Sept. 24 at 8.

**Steve Ross**—92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Sept. 25 at 8.

**Korean Festival of Music and Dance**—Carnegie Hall. Sept. 25 at 8.

**Barry Manilow**—Paramount (formerly the Felt Forum), Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Sept. 25-28 at 8.

## SPORTS

### HOME TEAMS

**Mets**—Vs. the Chicago Cubs, Sept. 18-19 at 1:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the St. Louis Cardinals, Sept. 20 at 7:40 and Sept. 21-22 at 1:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the Pittsburgh Pirates, Sept. 24-26 at 7:40.

**Yankees**—Vs. the Milwaukee Brewers, Sept. 16-18 at 7:30.

**Giants**—Vs. the Cleveland Browns, Sept. 22 at 1.

**Rangers**—Exhibition games: Vs. the Islanders, Sept. 19. . . . ¶ Vs. the Devils, Sept. 23. (Game time, 7: 30.)

**Islanders**—An exhibition game: Vs. the Devils, Sept. 24 at 7:35.

**Devils**—An exhibition game: Vs. the Rangers, Sept. 20 at 7:45.

(The Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; the Yankees at Yankee Stadium, 293-6000; the Giants at Giants Stadium, 1-201 935-8111; the Rangers at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

### RACING

**Horses**—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. . . . At the Meadowlands: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays at 8, Tuesdays at 1, and Sundays at 6.

**Yachts and Schooners**—The race for the Mayor's Cup will be held in New York Harbor on Sept. 21, starting at 11. The best dry-land viewing spot is Battery Park.

## ABOVE AND BEYOND

**Viking Ships**—On Sept. 25, three ships like those that Leif Eriksson sailed from Norway will dock in the harbor at the South Street Seaport in celebration of Eriksson's landing a thousand years ago in North America, which he dubbed Vinland (probably for the grapes he found growing here). A day of festivities is planned. For information, call 732-7678.

**"Operation Solomon"**—An exhibition, in the lobby of the Empire State Building (Fifth Ave. at 34th St.), that commemorates the airlifting of fourteen thousand Ethiopian Jews to Tel Aviv last May. The show consists primarily of photographs, with some examples of Ethiopian artifacts: baskets, tools, and such. Open daily, 8 a.m. through 11 p.m.; through Nov. 25. Admission is free.

**Readings**—Sept. 24 at 7: David Trinidad, John Ash, and Susan Wheeler, all contributors to "The Best American Poetry 1991," will read from their own poetry. (Brentano's, 597 Fifth Ave., at 48th St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Sept. 24 at 8: Tina McElroy Ansa, Madison Smartt Bell, Percival Everett, Cathryn Hankla, and Jill McCorkle, Southern writers all, will read from their own works. (Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. and LaGuardia Pl. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Sept. 25 at 8: Nadine Gordimer reads from her new collection of stories. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799, Ext. 206.)

**Walks**—Sept. 21 at 1: A walk along Bleecker St., from east to west. Sponsored by Citywalks. (For information and reservations, call 989-2456.). . . ¶ Sept. 21 at 2:30: A stroll along Central Park West, which passes the residences of many notable New Yorkers. Sponsored by Adventure on a Shoestring. (For information and reservations, call 265-2663.). . . ¶ Sept. 22 at 1: A historically-minded walk through the Lower East Side. Sponsored by the Museum of the City of New York. (For information and reservations, call 534-1672.)

**Memorandum**—The Feast of San Gennaro, in Little Italy, continues through Sept. 22.

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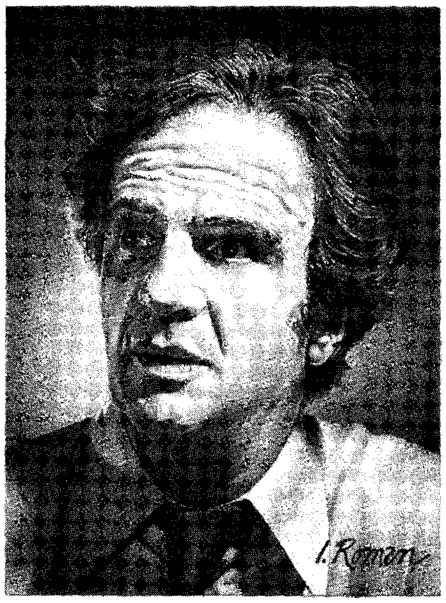
# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

## THE MOVIE HOUSES

| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |  |  |  |

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 18



*François Truffaut*
*(two double bills at the Biograph)*

### EAST SIDE

**Angelika Film Center,** 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Slacker" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll" (†).
Theatre 3: "La Femme Nikita" (†).
Theatre 4: The 23rd International Tournée of Animation.
Theatre 5: "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll" (†).
Theatre 6: "Trust" (†).

**Public Theatre,** 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Through Sept. 19: "New Jack City" (directed by Mario Van Peebles), with Wesley Snipes, Ice-T, Judd Nelson, and Van Peebles; and "La Dolce Vita" (1960, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg.
From Sept. 20: "My Name Is Julia Ross" (1945, Joseph H. Lewis), with Nina Foch, Dame May Whitty, and George Macready; and "The Big Combo" (1955, Joseph H. Lewis), with Cornel Wilde, Jean Wallace, Richard Conte, and Brian Donlevy.

**Movieland 8th Street Triplex,** 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Barton Fink" (†).
Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).
Theatre 3: "Barton Fink" (†).

**Loews Village Theatre VII,** 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Thelma & Louise" (†).
Theatre 2: "Defenseless" (†).
Theatre 3: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).
Theatre 4: "Liebestraum" (Mike Figgis), with Kevin Anderson, Pamela Gidley, Bill Pullman, and Kim Novak.
Theatre 5: Through Sept. 19: "Dead Again" (†). From Sept. 20: "Livin' Large!" (Michael Schultz), with Terrence (T. C.) Carson.
Theatre 6: Through Sept. 19: "The Pope Must Die" (Peter Richardson), with Robbie Coltrane, Beverly D'Angelo, and Herbert Lom. From Sept. 20: "Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall.
Theatre 7: "Dead Again" (†).

**Cinema Village 12th Street,** 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
"Eating" (†).

**Village East Cinemas,** 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "The Miracle" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Doctor" (†).
Theatre 3: "A Matter of Degrees" (W. T. Morgan).
Theatre 4: "Naked Tango" (Leonard Schrader), with Mathilda May, Fernando Ray, Esai Morales, and Vincent D'Onofrio.
Theatre 5: Through Sept. 17: "True Identity" (Charles Lane), with Lenny Henry, Frank Langella, and Lane. From Sept. 18: "Undertow" (Thomas Mazziotti), with Peter Dobson.
Theatre 6: "Blood and Concrete" (Jeffrey Reiner), with Billy Zane, Jennifer Beals, and Darren McGavin.
Theatre 7: (Matinées only) "101 Dalmatians" (†); and (evenings only) "Impromptu" (James Lapine), with Judy Davis, Hugh Grant, Mandy Patinkin, Bernadette Peters, and Julian Sands.

**Cinema Village 3rd Avenue,** between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
"Festival of Animation 1991."

**Loews 19th Street East 6,** B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 19: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, and Mikki Allen. From Sept. 20: "McBain" (James Glickenhaus), with Christopher Walken and Maria Conchita Alonso.
Theatre 2: "Harley Davidson and the Marlboro Man" (Simon Wincer), with Mickey Rourke and Don Johnson.
Theatre 3: "City Slickers" (†).
Theatre 4: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).
Theatre 5: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).
Theatre 6: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

**Gramercy,** Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"The Doctor" (†).

**Bay Cinema,** 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Dead Men Don't Die."

**Murray Hill Cinemas,** 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "101 Dalmatians" (†); and (evenings only) "True Identity" (Charles Lane), with Lenny Henry, Frank Langella, and Lane.
Theatre 2: "Thelma & Louise" (†).
Theatre 3: "Doc Hollywood" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Sept. 19: "Boyz N the Hood" (†). From Sept. 20: "Livin' Large!" (Michael Schultz), with Terrence (T. C.) Carson.

**Loews 34th Street Showplace,** 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, and Mikki Allen.
Theatre 2: "Dead Again" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Sept. 19: "Harley Davidson and the Marlboro Man" (Simon Wincer), with Mickey Rourke and Don Johnson. From Sept. 20: "McBain" (James Glickenhaus), with Christopher Walken and Maria Conchita Alonso.

**34th St. East,** 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Hot Shots!" (†).

**Eastside Cinema,** 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through Sept. 19: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).
From Sept. 20: "McBain" (James Glickenhaus), with Christopher Walken and Maria Conchita Alonso.

**Sutton 1 and 2,** 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "Doc Hollywood" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 17: "True Identity" (Charles Lane), with Lenny Henry, Frank Langella, and Lane. From Sept. 18: "The Doctor" (†).

**Gotham Cinema,** 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Hot Shots!" (†).

**Plaza,** 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll" (†).

**Manhattan Twin,** 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 19: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender). From Sept. 20: "Livin' Large!" (Michael Schultz), with Terrence (T. C.) Carson.

**59th Street East Cinema,** 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"City Slickers" (†).

**Baronet and Coronet,** 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 19: "Defenseless" (†). From Sept. 20: "Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall.
Theatre 2: "Barton Fink" (†).

**Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue,** 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 17: "The Doctor" (†). From Sept. 18: "Paradise" (Mary Agnes Donoghue), with Melanie Griffith, Don Johnson, and Elijah Wood.
Theatre 2: "Naked Tango" (Leonard Schrader), with Mathilda May, Fernando Ray, Esai Morales, and Vincent D'Onofrio.
Theatre 3: (Matinées only) "101 Dalmatians" (†); and (evenings only) "The Miracle" (†).

**Gemini 1 and 2,** 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 19: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, and Mikki Allen. From Sept. 20: "The Fisher King" (Terry Gilliam), with Robin Williams and Jeff Bridges.
Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).

**Beekman,** 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"The Commitments" (†).

**Loews New York Twin,** 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Dead Again" (†).
Theatre 2: "Crooked Hearts" (Michael Bortman), with Jennifer Jason Leigh, Peter Coyote, Vincent D'Onofrio, and Peter Berg.

**68th St. Playhouse,** 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Story of Boys and Girls" (Pupi Avati, in Italian).

**Loews Tower East,** 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"The Pope Must Die" (Peter Richardson), with Robbie Coltrane, Beverly D'Angelo, and Herbert Lom.

**U. A. East,** 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Dead Again" (†).

**Park & 86th Street Cinemas,** 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 19: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender). From Sept. 20: "Livin' Large!" (Michael Schultz), with Terrence (T. C.) Carson.

**86th Street East Twin,** 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "City Slickers" (†).
Theatre 2: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).

### WEST SIDE

**Film Forum,** 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 17: "Swan Lake—The Zone" (1990, directed by Yuri Illienko; in Ukrainian). From Sept. 18: "Black Lizard" (1968, Kinji Fukasaku; in Japanese).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Paris Is Burning" (†).

**Waverly 1 and 2,** 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.
Theatre 2: "Double Impact" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

**8th St. Playhouse,** 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Jungle Fever" (Spike Lee), with Wesley Snipes and Annabella Sciorra.

**Art Greenwich Twin,** Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 19: "Hot Shots!" (†). From Sept. 20: "McBain" (James Glickenhaus), with Christopher Walken and Maria Conchita Alonso.
Theatre 2: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender).

**Quad Cinema,** 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Truly, Madly, Deeply" (Anthony Minghella), with Juliet Stevenson, Alan Rickman, Bill Paterson, and Michael Maloney.
Theatre 2: "My Mother's Castle" (Yves Robert, in French), with Julien Ciamaca.
Theatre 3: "My Father's Glory" (Yves Robert, in French), with Julien Ciamaca.
Theatre 4: Through Sept. 17: "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" (1939, Frank Capra), with Jean Arthur, James Stewart, Claude Rains, Guy Kibbee, and Beulah Bondi. . . . ¶ Sept. 18-19: "You Can't Take It With You" (1938, Frank Capra), with Jean Arthur, James Stewart, Lionel Barrymore, and Ed-

ward Arnold. . . . ¶ Sept. 20-22: "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town" (†). . . . ¶ Sept. 23-24: "Lost Horizon" (†). . . . ¶ From Sept. 25: "The Miracle Woman" (1931, Frank Capra), with Barbara Stanwyck, Sam Hardy, and David Manners.

**Chelsea Cinemas,** 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)

Theatre 1: "Dead Again" (†).

Theatre 2: "Hot Shots!" (†).

Theatre 3: "The Commitments" (†).

Theatre 4: "Defenseless" (†).

Theatre 5: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).

Theatre 6: "The Commitments" (†).

Theatre 7: Through Sept. 19: "Pure Luck" (Nadia Tass), with Martin Short and Danny Glover. From Sept. 20: "Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall.

Theatre 8: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.

Theatre 9: Through Sept. 19: "Double Impact" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme. From Sept. 20: "Livin' Large!" (Michael Schultz), with Terrence (T. C.) Carson.

**23rd St. West Triplex,** 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender).

Theatre 2: "Doc Hollywood" (†).

Theatre 3: "Dead Men Don Die."

**Guild,** 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

"101 Dalmatians" (†).

**Worldwide Cinemas,** 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)

Theatre 1: "An Angel at My Table" (Jane Campion), with Kerry Fox.

Theatre 2: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender).

Theatre 3: "City Slickers" (†).

Theatre 4: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, and Mikki Allen.

Theatre 5: "Double Impact" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

Theatre 6: "Thelma & Louise"(†).

**Ziegfeld,** 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

"The Commitments" (†).

**Loews Festival,** 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

Through Sept. 19: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.

From Sept. 20: "The Indian Runner" (Sean Penn), with David Morse.

**57th St. Playhouse,** 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

"Thelma & Louise" (†).

**Carnegie Hall Cinemas,** 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

Theatre 1: "Barton Fink" (†).

Theatre 2: "Barton Fink" (†).

**Loews Fine Arts,** 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)

"Dogfight" (Nancy Savoca), with River Phoenix and Lili Taylor.

**Cinema 3,** 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

**Loews Paramount,** B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

"The Doctor" (†).

**62nd & Broadway,** 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)

"The Commitments" (†).

**Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3,** B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: "Uranus" (Claude Berri, in French), with Jean-Pierre Marielle, Philippe Noiret, Michel Blanc, Gérard Desarthe, Gérard Depardieu, and Daniel Prevost.

Theatre 2: "Europa Europa" (†).

Theatre 3: "Paris Is Burning" (†).

**Regency,** B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Through Sept. 19: "Hot Shots!" (†)

From Sept. 20: "Rambling Rose" (Martha Coolidge), with Laura Dern, Diane Ladd, Lukas Hass, and Robert Duvall.

**Loews 84th Street Sixplex,** B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: "City Slickers" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Sept. 19: "The Pope Must Die" (Peter Richardson), with Robbie Coltrane, Beverly D'Angelo, and Herbert Lom. From Sept. 20: "The Fisher King" (Terry Gilliam), with Robin Williams and Jeff Bridges.

Theatre 3: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

Theatre 4: "Dead Again" (†).

Theatre 5: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).

Theatre 6: Through Sept. 18: "Doc Hollywood" (†). Sept. 19: Theatre closed. From Sept. 20: "McBain" (James Glickenhaus), with Christopher Walken and Maria Conchita Alonso.

**Metro Cinema 1 and 2,** B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.

Theatre 2: "Defenseless" (†).

**Olympia 1 and 11,** B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: Through Sept. 19: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender). From Sept. 20: "Livin' Large!" (Michael Schultz), with Terrence (T. C.) Carson.

Theatre 2: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).

## TIMES SQUARE AREA

**Criterion Center,** B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).

Theatre 3: "Defenseless" (†).

Theatre 4: Through Sept. 19: "Boyz N the Hood" (†). From Sept. 20: "McBain" (directed by James Glickenhaus), with Christopher Walken and Maria Conchita Alonso.

Theatre 5: "Hot Shots!" (†).

Theatre 6: Through Sept. 19: "Dead Men Don't Die." From Sept. 20: To be announced.

**Embassy 1,** B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

"True Identity" (Charles Lane), with Lenny Henry, Frank Langella, and Lane.

**Embassy 2, 3, and 4,** 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 1: "Harley Davidson and the Marlboro Man" (Simon Wincer), with Mickey Rourke and Don Johnson.

Theatre 2: "Body Parts" (Eric Red), with Jeff Fahey.

Theatre 3: (Separate admissions) "Jungle Fever" (Spike Lee), with Wesley Snipes and Annabella Sciorra; and "Do the Right Thing" (†).

**Loews Astor Plaza,** 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"Dead Again" (†).

**National Twin,** B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: Through Sept. 19: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender). From Sept. 20: "Livin' Large!" (Michael Schultz), with Terrence (T. C.) Carson.

Theatre 2: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.

**West Side Cinema 1 and 2,** 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)

Theatre 1: "Straight Out of Brooklyn" (Matty Rich).

Theatre 2: "Doc Hollywood" (†).

## REVIVAL HOUSES

**Biograph Cinema,** 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

Through Sept. 17: "Women in Love" (1970, directed by Ken Russell), with Alan Bates, Oliver Reed, Glenda Jackson, and Jennie Linden; and "Marat/Sade" (1967, Peter Brook), performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Sept. 18: "The Green Room" (1979, François Truffaut; in French), with Truffaut, Nathalie Baye, and Jean Dasté; and "The Story of Adele H." (1975, Truffaut; in French), with Isabelle Adjani.

Sept. 19-21: "Mississippi Mermaid" (1970, François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Catherine Deneuve; and "The Bride Wore Black" (1968, Truffaut; in French), with Jeanne Moreau.

From Sept. 22: Theatre closed.

**Film Forum 2,** 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Sept. 16: "Solaris" (1976, Andrei Tarkovsky; in Russian).

Sept. 17: "Suspiria" (1977, Dario Argento), with Jessica Harper; and "Four Flies on Grey Velvet" (1972, Argento).

Sept. 18-19: "Robot Monster" (1953, Phil Tucker), with George Nader; and "Retik, The Moon Menace" (1952, Fred C. Brannon).

Sept. 20-21: "Project A" (1983, Jackie Chan), with Chan.

Sept. 22-23: "A Chinese Ghost Story" (1987, Ching Siu-Tung).

Sept. 24-25: "A Better Tomorrow" (1986, John Woo).

**Theatre 80 St. Marks,** 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Sept. 16: "Juliet of the Spirits" (1965, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Giulietta Masina and Sandra Milo; and "Il Bidone" ("The Swindlers"; 1955, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Broderick Crawford, Masina, Richard Basehart, and Franco Fabrizi.

Sept. 17: "Twelve Angry Men" (1957, Sidney Lumet), with Henry Fonda, Lee J. Cobb, and Jack Warden; and "Witness for the Prosecution" (1958, Billy Wilder), with Tyrone Power, Marlene Dietrich, Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, and Una O'Connor.

Sept. 18: "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (1966, Mike Nichols), with Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, George Segal, and Sandy Dennis; and "Butterfield 8" (1960, Daniel Mann), with Taylor and Laurence Harvey.

Sept. 19: "Red River" (1948, Howard Hawks), with Montgomery Clift, John Wayne, Walter Brennan, and Joanne Dru; and "Shane" (†).

Sept. 20-21: "Rebecca" (1940, Alfred Hitchcock), with Joan Fontaine and Laurence Olivier; and "The Spiral Staircase" (1948, Robert Siodmak), with Dorothy McGuire, George Brent, Ethel Barrymore, and Kent Smith.

Sept. 22: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972, Bernardo Bertolucci; in French and English), with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider; and "The Men"(†).

Sept. 23: "Alexander Nevsky" (†); and "Ballad of a Soldier" (1959, Grigori Chukhrai; in Russian).

Sept. 24: "Slaughterhouse-Five" (1972, George Roy Hill), with Michael Sacks; and "Catch-22" (†).

Sept. 25: "Waterloo Bridge" (1940, Mervyn LeRoy), with Vivien Leigh and Robert Taylor; and "Sidewalks of London" (1938, Tim Whelan), with Charles Laughton, Vivien Leigh, and Rex Harrison.

## FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

**Museum of Modern Art,** Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—Sept. 17 at 2:30 and 6: "Freedom Is Paradise" (1990, directed by Sergei Bodrov; in Russian). . . . ¶ Sept. 19 at 2:30 and Sept. 21 at 5: "Night and Fog" (1955, Alain Resnais), a documentary; and "Trial on the Road" (1971, Aleksei Gherman; in Russian). . . . ¶ Sept. 19 at 6: "Childhood Days" (1990, Masahiro Shinoda; in Japanese). . . . ¶ Sept. 20 at 12:30, 3, and 6; Sept. 21-22 at 2:30 and 5:30; and Sept. 23 at 12:30, 3, and 6: A program of British award-winnning commercials—BABA 1991. . . . ¶ Sept. 20 at 2 and Sept. 22 at 5: "Rebellion in Patagonia" (1974, Hector Olivera; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Sept. 20 at 6 and Sept. 21 at 2: "North by Northwest" (1959, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint, James Mason, Jessie Royce Landis, Leo G. Carroll, and Martin Landau. . . . ¶ Sept. 22 at 2 and Sept. 23 at 6: "An Impossible Voyage" (1904, Georges Méliès; silent) and "Zero City" (1989, Karen Shaknazarov). . . . ¶ Sept. 23 at 2:30 and Sept. 24 at 6: "Shanghai Express" (1932, Josef von Sternberg), with Marlene Dietrich, Anna May Wong, and Warner Oland. . . . ¶ Sept. 24 at 2:30: "Emperor of the North Pole" (1973, Robert Aldrich), with Lee Marvin, Ernest Borgnine, and Keith Carradine. . . . ¶ Sept. 24 at 3: "Blue Express" (1929, Ilya Trauberg; silent). . . . ¶ Sept. 24 at 6: "Train of the Suicides" (1931, Edmond T. Gréville; in French, with no English subtitles), with Georges Colin.

**New York Film Festival**—The first programs in a seventeen-day series of international films—At **Alice Tully Hall:** Sept. 20 at 7:45: "The Double Life of Véronique" (Krzysztof Kieslowski, Poland/France). . . . **Avery Fisher Hall:** Sept. 20 at 9: "The Double Life of Véronique.". . . **Alice Tully Hall:** Sept. 21 at 12:30 and Sept. 22 at 7: "Adam's Rib" (Viatcheslav Krichtofovitch, U.S.S.R.). . . ¶ Sept. 21 at 3: "Rocco and His Brothers" (1960, Luchino Visconti; Italy). . . . ¶ Sept. 21 at 6:30 and Sept. 22 at 9:30: "Amelia Lopes O'Neill" (Valéria Sarmiento, Chile/France/Spain). . . . ¶ Sept. 21 at 9:30 and Sept. 22 at 1:30: "Toto the Hero" (Jaco van Dormael, Belgium/France). . . . ¶ Sept. 22 at 4 and Sept. 23 at 9:15: "No Life King" (Jun Ichikawa, Japan). . . . ¶ Sept. 23 at 6:15 and Sept. 24 at 9:15: "The Suspended Step of the Stork" (Theo Angelopoulos, Greece/France). . . . ¶ Sept. 24 at 6:15: "Inventory" (Krzysztof Zanussi, Germany/Poland). . . . ¶ Sept. 25 at 6:15: "The Other Eye" (Johanna Heer and Werner Schmiedel, Austria). . . . ¶ Sept. 25 at 9:30: "Jacquot de Nantes" (Agnès Varda, France). (For tickets, call 875-5050.)

**American Museum of the Moving Image,** 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—Four silent Paramount comedies made at the Astoria Studios, with piano accompaniment. Sept. 21 at 3: "Miss Bluebeard" (1925, Frank Tuttle), with Bebe Daniels and Raymond Griffith. . . . ¶ Sept. 21 at 4:30: "Running Wild" (1927, Gregory La Cava), with W. C. Fields. . . . ¶ Sept. 22 at 2: "Womanhandled" (1926, La Cava), with Richard Dix and Esther Ralston. . . . ¶ Sept. 22 at 4: "Let's Get Married" (1926, La Cava), with Dix, Lois Wilson, and Edna Mae Oliver.

# IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

**Alexander Nevsky** (1938)—Sergei Eisenstein's ponderously surging epic has a famous score by Prokofiev and a stunning battle on ice. When it's great it's very great, but there are long deadly stretches (which isn't the case with Eisenstein's other films). The plot has something to do with the thirteenth-century invasion of Russia by German knights; needless to say, the Russians drive the invaders out. The propaganda isn't Communist but nationalist: the medieval story was used to warn Hitler to stay out. Photographed (as were all Eisenstein's feature films) by Eduard Tisse; with Nikolai Cherkassov as Prince Nevsky. In Russian.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 23.)

*Alan Ladd as "Shane"*

**Barton Fink**—The Coen brothers' macabre comedy about a blocked writer in 1941 Hollywood is densely packed with allusions, clever dialogue, ingenious visual jokes, startling plot twists, and imaginative atmospheric effects, yet it feels thin. It's an empty tour de force, and what's dismaying about the picture is that the filmmakers (Joel Coen directed, Ethan Coen produced, and they wrote the script together) seem inordinately pleased with its hermetic meaninglessness. Fink (John Turturro), the protagonist, is a left-wing New York playwright—obviously based on Clifford Odets—who signs a contract to write screenplays in Hollywood. His first assignment is a wrestling picture for Wallace Beery. He can't get started on it: he sits in his seedy, depressing hotel room, stares at the typewriter, and feels defeated. The Coens treat this emblematic figure of thirties culture with merciless contempt. They quickly expose him as a phony, a buffoon, and a talentless hack, and then spend the rest of the movie punishing him. The picture is designed to visit ever more grotesque indignities on a character who's pitiful from the outset; there's not much fun in that. And there's no fun at all in Turturro's hyperactive performance. He gapes and blinks and stammers and contorts his body into ungainly poses, and his mouth never seems to close: the way he plays this leftist intellectual, the movie might as well have been called "The Nutty Pinko." The Coens' interests are purely academic, and their prankish formalism becomes very irritating in the course of the picture. There's nothing at stake in the filmmakers' systematic dismantling of their hero and all he stands for—except, perhaps, their desire to demonstrate their superiority to the ethics and aesthetics of an earlier time. The Coens appear to be taking their lack of seriousness seriously: they're nihilist showoffs. Also with John Goodman, Michael Lerner, John Mahoney, Judy Davis, and Tony Shalhoub. The movie won awards for best picture, best director, and best actor (Turturro) at the 1991 Cannes Film Festival.—T.R. (*Reviewed in our issue of 9/9/91.*) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Coronet, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

**Boyz N the Hood**—The writer and director, John Singleton, is a twenty-three-year-old graduate of the U.S.C. film school. This movie, his first, is a classically constructed—and therefore rather predictable—coming-of-age drama about young black men growing up on the mean streets of south-central Los Angeles. The picture conveys a vivid sense of the dangers, both physical and emotional, of day-to-day existence in this ravaged urban environment. It's a war zone, and its inhabitants—the people on the front lines—mostly don't have the luxury of planning long-range survival strategies: they're too busy reacting to the immediate, unremitting daily threats. Singleton's evocation of real people's struggles to find some measure of peace and sanity in these grim urban circumstances is heartfelt and often moving, and the movie provides a welcome corrective to the dehumanizing sensationalism of the local-news version of inner-city life. But the young filmmaker's professionalism and precocious self-assurance sometimes work against his best instincts. Singleton's plot is disappointingly conventional; it obeys screenwriting-class rules. The experience he's dealing with here deserves something more than the tidy dramatic structure that he has imposed on it. We get glimpses of what the movie might have been in the complex, magnetic performance of Ice Cube, a rap star (formerly of N.W.A.), who plays a neighborhood gangster type named Doughboy. Also with Cuba Gooding, Jr., Larry Fishburne, Nia Long, Tyra Ferrell, and Angela Bassett.—T.R. (Loews Village Theatre VII, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and Olympia. . . . ¶ Murray Hill Cinemas, Eastside Cinema, and Criterion Center; through Sept. 19.)

**Catch-22** (1970)—Mike Nichols' third picture was this hugely ambitious failure. He gave Joseph Heller's Second World War novel—a black comedy about the insanity of military life—a grandiloquent staging, with Terry Southern-style caricatures out of "Dr. Strangelove" and Fellini-style episodes set in Rome, and the picture got so heavy and messagey that the ironies were buried. There's a beautiful flight-tower sequence early on, and there are startling effects and good revue touches here and there, but the picture goes on and on, as if it were determined to impress us. It goes on so long that it cancels itself out, even out of people's memories; it was long awaited and then forgotten almost instantly. With Alan Arkin as Yossarian, Jon Voight, Richard Benjamin, Art Garfunkel, Buck Henry (who also wrote the script), Martin Balsam, Orson Welles, Bob Balaban, Paula Prentiss, Martin Sheen, Jack Gilford, Peter Bonerz, Charles Grodin, Tony Perkins, Bob Newhart, and, in a particularly offensive scene, Marcel Dalio. The acting of some of the high-ranking officers is so gross that at times one thinks the moral must be that as soon as your rank reaches major, you're a monster. Cinematography by David Watkin.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 24.)

**City Slickers**—This feel-good comedy, directed by Ron Underwood from a script by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel, is a depressingly efficient piece of Hollywood product. The hero, Mitch Robbins (Billy Crystal), is a thirty-nine-year-old New York family man who's going through a killer midlife crisis. His wife (Patricia Wettig) gets so fed up with his moping that she virtually orders him to take a vacation with his buddies Ed (Bruno Kirby) and Phil (Daniel Stern); Ed, a daredevil, macho type, has arranged for them to spend two weeks on a real cattle drive out West. Mitch's wife looks him in the eye, and says earnestly, "Go and find your smile"—and, ninety minutes later, there it is, a grin as big as all outdoors. His pals pick up the odd nugget of wisdom along the trail, too. The movie alternates predictable tenderfoot gags (sore behinds, stampedes, and the like) with long, ludicrous passages of group-therapy-on-the-range. Jack Palance, as Curly, the trail boss, manages some dry, macabre comic effects, and the animals are good—they're interesting to look at, and they don't make bad jokes. You can't help sympathizing with the cattle; by the time the movie's over, you know what it feels like to be part of the herd. Also with Helen Slater.—T.R. (6/17/91) (Loews 19th Street East 6, 59th Street East Cinema, 86th Street East Twin, Worldwide Cinemas, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

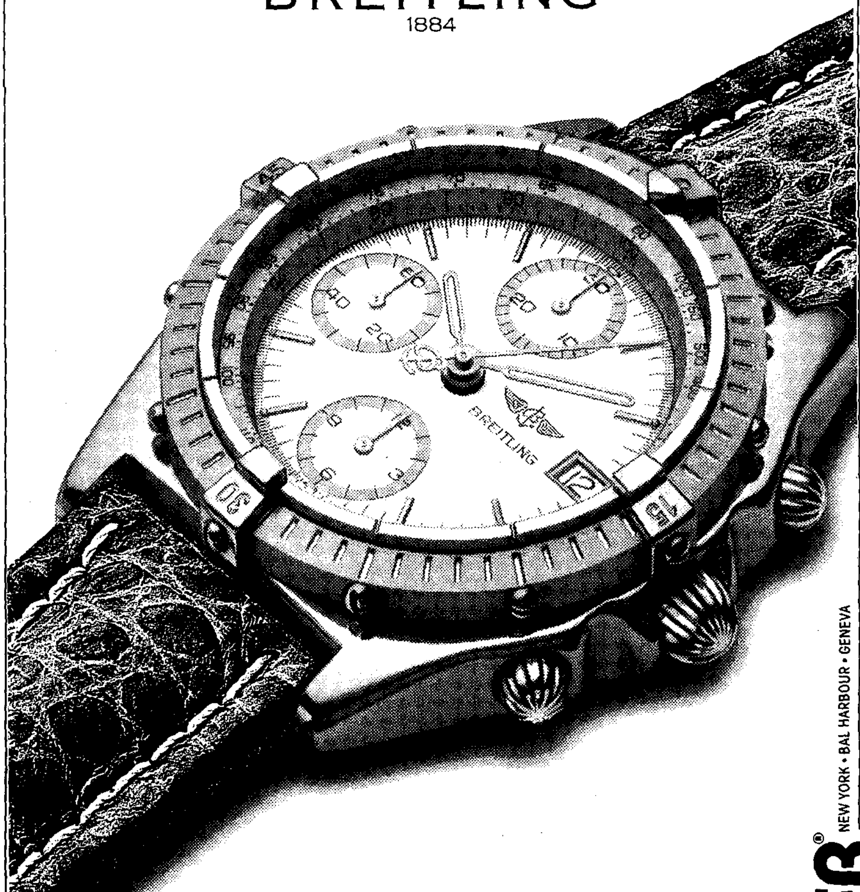
**The Commitments**—Alan Parker's film is a loose, friendly musical comedy about the brief career of an Irish soul band. The Commitments are the brainchild of an energetic young music enthusiast named Jimmy Rabbitte (Robert Arkins), who lives in a poor Dublin neighborhood. He puts together a ten-piece group that learns, eventually, to play precise and spirited versions of soul classics in the Memphis style. The music of the Commitments isn't original, but that doesn't prevent it from being enormously entertaining: the band's hard-won proficiency charms us. Parker concentrates on the day-to-day details of rehearsals and performances; he seems to revel in the complexity of the group's musical, emotional, and sexual interactions, and he does full comic justice to the petty irritations of life in a band. What holds the Commitments together is a combination of Jimmy's ingenuity, their common pleasure in making music, and the daily challenge of responding to their fellow band members' provocations with quick, profane humor. The kids' verbal sparring is another kind of music—maybe the true sound of Dublin soul. Until the last half hour, when the direction gets a little pushy, the picture has an offhand, unassuming grace. Most of the Commitments are played by young Dublin musicians who answered a casting-call advertisement. They're a vivacious and spontaneous crew: Andrew Strong, Angeline Ball, Maria Doyle, Glen Hansard, Kenneth McCluskey, Félim Gormley, Dave Finnegan, Dick Massey, and Michael Aherne. The only professional actors among them are Bronagh Gallagher and Johnny Murphy (as the group's guru, a fiftyish trumpet player known as Joey the Lips). Colm Meaney does a very funny turn as Jimmy's Elvis-worshipping dad. The screenplay is by Dick Clement, Ian La Frenais, and Roddy Doyle, from Doyle's novel. The songs are great—chosen, with unusual intelligence, from the repertoires of Otis Redding, Aretha Franklin, Wilson Pickett, and other soul giants.—T.R. (8/26/91) (Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and 62nd & Broadway.)

**Dead Again**—This murder mystery, directed by Kenneth Branagh from a wildly complicated screenplay by Scott Frank, wears its inanity on its sleeve. It shuttles breezily between the present day, in which an L.A. detective named Mike Church (Branagh) is trying to discover the identity of an attractive amnesiac (Emma Thompson), and the late forties, in which a European composer and conductor (also Branagh) may or may not have murdered his pianist wife (also Thompson). These stories are, of course, connected: the amnesiac might even be a reincarnation of the conductor's wife, stabbed to death with a pair of scissors forty years earlier. Branagh makes no attempt to disguise the script's preposterousness. He revels in it, both as actor and as director. The mood of the picture is both frivolous and spooky, and the suspense often seems a function of sheer giddiness: as the movie dances, with drunken insouciance, toward the simultaneous climaxes of its two stories, the tension we feel is partly fear that Branagh won't be able to maintain his precarious balance. Finally, the picture does come crashing down. When it's time to wrap up the mystery, the movie leaves too many of the plot's enigmas unresolved, and Branagh's insouciance loses its charm. Throughout, he has toyed affectionately with mystery-fiction conventions and old-movie style, and his dash and flair have carried us along. But the botched conclusion casts a bit of a pall over the reckless fun that the movie has given us. In the end, Branagh's approach to the genre seems negligent, insultingly cavalier. Also with Derek Jacobi, Andy Garcia, Hanna Schygulla, and (in a hilarious cameo) Robin Williams.—T.R. (9/9/91) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, U.A. East, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

**Defenseless**—The tail doesn't wag the dog, it merely swats some of the fleas that infest this mongrel thriller. Barbara Hershey is the thousandth smart female lawyer since "Jagged Edge" to fall for a shady client, in this case J. T. Walsh: he turns out to be married to Hershey's college roommate (played by Mary Beth Hurt). Sam Shepard is the male lead—the cop who investigates Walsh's murder. The movie starts out flip, squeezing laughs from the sleaziness of the porno world and the ostentation of L.A.'s nouveau riche; then it becomes hypocritically "moral." James Hicks' script (from a story by Hicks and Jeff Burkhart) brings up legal issues it never rules on. Audiences are likely to raise more objections than the lawyers do. Hershey skillfully skirts breakdown, Hurt is weirdly funny and dissociated, and Shepard milks his taciturnity for humor as well as tension. There's even a slick final twist. But these virtues don't compensate for a narrative that recklessly cuts suspects and victims in and out of the story line. It's the suspense-film equivalent of a gerrymander. Martin Campbell directed.—M.S. (Loews Village Theatre VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Baronet; through Sept. 19.)

**Do the Right Thing** (1989)—The third feature by Spike Lee takes place in the black neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, on a punishingly hot day; the focus of the action is a pizzeria, Sal's Famous, which is apparently the last white-owned business on the block; and the climax is a riot sparked by a monstrous act of police brutality. At its most basic, Lee's intention is to demonstrate how in a racially polarized society the slow accumulation of small irritations can swell to something huge and ugly and lethal. It's a solid idea for a movie, and initially the picture provides its share of incidental pleasures. It has loads of atmosphere, and superb cinematography by Ernest Dickerson, who gives the images a daring, Hawaiian-shirt glare. And, although most of the many characters Lee shows us are types, at least there are a lot of different ones, and their encounters are often funny. But Lee goes wrong by pushing his material to a "powerful" climax, a Scorsese-like explosion of violence: he sacrifices political clarity for the sake of the big statement. He's nimble-witted and passionate, but his movie seems to shout at us rather than speak to us. In addition to writing, producing, and directing, Lee also plays the pivotal role of Mookie, the pizza deliveryman. Others in the cast are Danny Aiello (as Sal), Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, Giancarlo Esposito, Bill Nunn, Rosie Perez, Joie Lee, John Turturro, and Richard Edson; as a trio of middle-aged street-corner philosophers, Paul Benjamin, Frankie Faison, and Robin Harris are responsible for the movie's best, loosest scenes.—T.R. (Embassy.)

**Doc Hollywood**—The cast is amiable, but the movie is routinely ingratiating. Michael J. Fox plays a plastic surgeon en route from Washington, D.C., to Beverly Hills, who crashes his '56 Porsche Speedster in Grady, South Carolina, "the squash capital of the South." There he learns about life beyond liposuction. Grady is a TV-bred baby boomer's fantasy. At times, it's Mayberry with breasts, peopled with likable eccentrics and down-home beauties—including a smart, sexy gal who plans to stay put (Julie Warner) and a live wire who's aching to get out (Bridget Fonda). At other times, it's a racially corrected version of the cultured Dixie in PBS's "The Civil War": Fox's ornery medical superior (Barnard Hughes) recites poetry, and the 58th Grady Squash Festival features a special screening of Buster Keaton's "The General." Fonda gets to ply her ticklish erotic rascality, and Woody Harrelson, as an inexplicably smoldering insurance agent, jolts



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*"The Men" (playing September 22 at Theatre 80 St. Marks), Fred Zinnemann's sensitive 1950 study of paraplegic Second World War veterans, is a message movie with a direct current of emotion that surges from Marlon Brando. Resentment, confusion, fury, hurt: Brando, in his film début, expresses everything going on inside his character, an orphan and a loner with what fifties educators called an "attitude problem." Everett Sloane, as the veterans'-hospital doctor in charge of paraplegics, pegs him as a rebel, then advises him that before he can change the world, he must accept it "without illusions." Carl Foreman's screenplay, which centers on Brando's up-and-down relationship with his fiancée, Teresa Wright, supports that point of view—a reasonable one. But Brando's power transcends reason. He learns to ask for help without losing his rage.*

*Like almost every movie produced by Stanley Kramer, "The Men" is a demonstration of social consciousness, laying out the problems of injured vets' postwar readjustment and suggesting solutions (including Toughlove-like therapy). But like all the* best *Kramer films (none of which he directed himself), this one has an urgency that goes hand in hand with its topicality. Even the title is charged. Many of the characters, such as those played by Brando and the nonprofessional Arthur Jurado (a paraplegic himself), went into the war as boys; now they struggle to see themselves as complete men. The scenes that depict their romantic and family dilemmas are like adolescent nightmares, only heightened and deepened. When Brando decides to get into shape, he turns the workout footage into an adolescent ideal of attaining physical power. "The Men" is always intelligent and moving. Because of Brando's kinetic intensity, it's also exhilarating.*

every scene he's in with aberrant comic energy. But there's a jerry-built climax and a protracted post-climax. Michael Caton-Jones directed; Peter Seaman, Jeffrey Price, and Daniel Pyne wrote the script, from Laurian Leggett's adaptation of "What? . . . Dead Again?" by Neil Shulman, M.D.—M.S. (Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, 23rd St. West Triplex, and West Side Cinema. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through Sept. 18.)

**The Doctor**—Although it's sure to hook some viewers who want to see the medical establishment get knocked, this is no exposé—it's yet another story of identity crisis in the professional class, a fraternal, if not identical, twin of "Regarding Henry." William Hurt plays the surgical golden boy who develops a case of galloping humanity after he's diagnosed with throat cancer; Christine Lahti and Charlie Korsmo play his neglected wife and son; Elizabeth Perkins is the life-force who inspires him (she's suffering from a Grade IV brain tumor); and, in matched parts, Mandy Patinkin is a callous Jewish doctor (Hurt's longtime partner) and Adam Arkin is a saintly Jewish doctor (who shows Hurt correct values). The director, Randa Haines, and the screenwriter, Robert Caswell, titillate the audience with a barrage of doctors' jokes and then try to prove that the cynical professionalism of hospital staffs is no laughing matter. In effect, the movie goes from comic shtick to problem-drama shtick, and fuses them. Hurt's performance is the type usually described as "accomplished," but what exactly does it accomplish? It's a careful embodiment of a clammed-up individual; not a hint of zest or dirt or soulfulness seeps out. Based on "A Taste of My Own Medicine," by Ed Rosenbaum, M.D.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Gramercy, and Loews Paramount. . . . ¶ Cinema I; through Sept. 17. . . . ¶ Sutton; starting Sept. 18.)

**Eating**—All the action in Henry Jaglom's film takes place at the fortieth-birthday party of a Southern California woman named Helene (Lisa Richards), and all the characters—thirty-eight of them—are women. None of the women at this party—with the exception of Helene's mother (Frances Bergen), who represents the values of an older generation—can eat without guilt; several of them have clinical eating disorders, for which they hate themselves. Jaglom films them in his usual group-therapy style: the camera remains fixed as characters lob banal confessions and accusations at each other. This is meant to create the illusion of raw emotional truth, but the bulimics' ball Jaglom throws here isn't much of a party, and it's bad therapy, too. Whatever Jaglom may have intended, his film winds up trivializing its theme and humiliating its subjects. He's advertising the movie as "A Very Serious Comedy About Women and Food," but its "serious" message is glibly offensive, and there's nothing funny about it.—T.R. (5/20/91) (Cinema Village 12th Street.)

**Europa Europa**—This superb film by the Polish director Agnieszka Holland is based on the memoirs of Salomon Perel, a German Jew who spent much of the Second World War passing for Aryan in an élite Hitler Youth academy. The movie dramatizes this almost inconceivable survival story with a surprisingly light touch. It bounds from one jaw-dropping episode to the next with the speed and the unnerving neutrality of a picaresque adventure, and never pauses to judge its ambiguous hero; it's content to let the ironies of his situation collect around him like reflections in dressing-room mirrors. His family's flight from the Nazis begins in 1938, on the eve of his bar mitzvah. Solly (played by a remarkable young actor, Marco Hofschneider) lands first in Lodz, Poland, and then in the Soviet Union, where he becomes a star pupil in a Communist school. After the Wehrmacht invades Russia and takes him prisoner, he reincarnates himself as an orphaned "pure" German, an Aryan child wandering in the barbaric eastern wilderness. By the time he is initiated into the Hitler Youth, he has already run through several identities, and has proved himself capable of playing his roles with conviction and enthusiasm. We remain, however, constantly aware (as he is) of what his Nazi disguise conceals—his circumcised penis, the irreversible and unambiguous sign of his identity as a Jew. Holland uses this physical evidence of Solly's Jewishness as the fulcrum of the movie's delicately balanced narrative and moral tensions. Also with Julie Delpy, Andre Wilms, Halina Labonarska, and Rene Hofschneider. The real Salomon Perel appears, as himself, in the movie's final scene. In German and Russian.—T.R. (7/1/91) (Lincoln Plaza.)

**La Femme Nikita**—The end of French cinema as we know it. Written and directed by Luc Besson. With Anne Parillaud, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Tcheky Karyo, and (in a cameo) Jeanne Moreau. In French.—T.R. (Angelika Film Center.)

**Hot Shots!**—"Good for a few laughs" may be the motto for the "Airplane!" college of filmmaking, but it applies literally to this sputtering spoof of military movies and commercials. The lampoons go all over the globe, in more ways than one. The director, Jim Abrahams, and his co-writer, Pat Proft (who also co-wrote "The Naked Gun 2½," with David Zucker), stab away at the myth of American and Hollywood know-how without proving their own competence at creating momentum or a solid comic personality. The maverick pilot played by Charlie Sheen isn't a magnetic parody figure. He simply stands in for an entire generation of male action stars who are also just stand-ins. And Abrahams' funny treatment of Second World War clichés doesn't mesh with his gloss on the MTV flyboy epic "Top Gun." His movie becomes part of the same junk-food chain as that glorified video game: the ad might as well read, "You've seen the original, you've bought the soundtrack, you've rented the cassette, now see the takeoff!" Co-starring Valeria Golino, Cary Elwes, Jon Cryer, the underused Bill Irwin and Lloyd Bridges, and the Chihuahuas Jake and Elwood.—M.S. (34th St. East, Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Art Greenwich Twin, and Regency; through Sept. 19.)

**101 Dalmatians** (1961)—One of the few Disney animated features that please adults as much as children, this action comedy has loads of waggish charm. The plot is out of a horror film. As Cruella De Vil prepares ninety-nine young Dalmatians for the kill so she can make dogskin coats, you can't help thinking, "The Silence of the Pups." By telling the story from the perspective of Pongo and Perdita, parents of fifteen dognap victims, the Disney team turns it into a light-fantastic parody: a dog's-eye (or child's-eye) view of storybook Britain. Humans are "pets," and a country-wide canine corps takes over when agencies like Scotland Yard fail. Cruella has been justly celebrated for her Tallulah-from-Hell flair (Betty Lou Gerson contributes an arsenal of Bankhead-like snarls). But Pongo is every bit her match. He's a gallant, resourceful animal with surprising pockets of slyness and gaiety, and the crisp, virile voice of Rod Taylor. Headed by a blustery sheepdog colonel, a Kipling-esque trio of barnyard soldiers aid Pongo and Perdita. The small army of pups form a lovable composite character and a constantly changing sight gag. Trekking through a blizzard-blasted landscape, they're a cross between a canine caterpillar chain and a coal-flecked snowdrift. Bill Peet wrote the smart script, from Dodie Smith's book; Wolfgang Reitherman, Clyde Geronimi, and Hamilton S. Luske directed.—M.S. (Guild. . . . ¶ Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Cinema 3rd Avenue. Matinées only.)

**Lost Horizon** (1937)—The original version of the James Hilton novel, directed by Frank Capra, from Robert Riskin's script—part popular adventure and part prissy, high-flown cracker-barrel sentimentality. The early trip through the icy waste is exciting, and Ronald Colman speaks in his charmingly cadenced manner, but Shangri-La, the genteel Himalayan utopia of peace, health, and eternal life, resembles, as Graham Greene pointed out, a film star's luxurious estate in Beverly Hills. With Sam Jaffe as the High Lama, Edward Everett Horton, Thomas Mitchell, Isabel Jewell, H. B. Warner, John Howard, Margo, and Jane Wyatt. Score by Dmitri Tiomkin.—P.K. (Quad Cinema; Sept. 23-24.)

**The Miracle**—A beautiful new film by the Irish writer and director Neil Jordan ("Mona Lisa," "The Company of Wolves"). The setting is the coastal town of Bray, which is a short train ride from Dublin. Two teen-agers, Jimmy (Niall Byrne) and Rose (Lorraine Pilkington), spend most of their days wandering along the seaside promenade and making up stories about the people they run into: taking off from the human material that presents itself to them, the kids trade verbal riffs with the gleeful competitiveness of jamming musicians. One day, they spot a mysterious-looking blond woman (Beverly D'Angelo), and Jimmy becomes obsessed with her. He pursues her, in Bray and in Dublin, with an ardor that's partly sexual and partly something else—a feeling so muddled and inchoate that he can't put a name to it. Jordan turns this simple story into a clear, complete vision of experience: everything we see (and hear) flows into everything else, with an unpredictable rightness. The imagery draws on some pretty outré sources, and the climax—the miracle of the title—is a daring, flamboyant gesture. But Jordan manages to unite everything—the florid imagery, the dark emotional undertones, the flaky comedy, the astonishing physical beauty of the Irish seacoast—into a single, unbroken mood, a smooth arc connecting the past and the present, the familiar and the unforeseen. Also with Donal McCann. The cinematography, by Philippe Rousselot, is extraordinary.—T.R. (7/15/91) (Village East Cinemas. . . . ¶ Cinema 3rd Avenue. Evenings only.)

**Mr. Deeds Goes to Town** (1936)—Frank Capra-style folk humor is better in slightly shorter doses (this runs almost two hours, and the pace could be quicker), but there's no use fighting one's enjoyment of this homey fantasy demonstrating the triumph of small-town values over big-city cynicism. Gary Cooper is Longfellow Deeds, the sincere greeting-card poet from New England who comes to New York; Jean Arthur is the wiseacre newspaperwoman who starts out by making a public joke of him and then falls in love with him. The film culminates in a courtroom sequence that introduced the word "pixilated" to just about every American home, and set people to examining each other's casual scribbles or sketches—their "doodles." Robert Riskin adapted the Clarence Budington Kelland *SatEvePost* story, "Opera Hat." The cast includes George Bancroft, Lionel Stander, Douglass Dumbrille, Ruth Donnelly, Emma Dunn, Raymond Walburn, Warren Hymer, Walter Catlett, Mayo Methot, and Jameson Thomas as the twitcher. Capra took the Academy Award for Best Director.—P.K. (Quad Cinema; Sept. 20-22.)

**Paris Is Burning**—Jennie Livingston's documentary about gay black and Latino men who compete in drag balls is a beautiful piece of work—lively, intelligent, exploratory. The drag queens we see here seem to be holding up a mirror to the world of the empowered as they see it in movies, TV shows, and magazines. In the ballroom some present themselves as elegant, glamorous women in designer outfits, and walk with the hip-swinging slouch of runway models, while others adopt more mundane personas: college students (of both sexes); military men; Wall Street businessmen; aristocrats at play, dressed for yachting or riding to hounds. The criteria by which all these turns are judged is verisimilitude—"realness." The material is almost too rich, too suggestive. Everything about the ball culture signifies so blatantly and so promiscuously that the movie induces a kind of semiotic daze. Livingston is smart enough not to reduce her subjects to the sum of their possible meanings, perhaps because she realizes that the way the drag performers manipulate image and fetishes and the iconography of popular culture is for many of them a sophisticated form of humor. The most self-aware of the gay men in this picture revel in the ironies of their social and sexual identities, and Livingston makes us appreciate the comic grace and the strange wisdom of that approach. Like all the best documentary filmmakers, she does her subjects the honor of allowing them to retain some of their mystery. Edited by Jonathan Oppenheim.—T.R. (3/25/91) (Film Forum, and Lincoln Plaza.)

**Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves**—A dull, dutiful trek through the legend of the bandit of Sherwood Forest, who stole from the rich and gave to the poor. Watching this picture is about as much fun as paying taxes, and far less stirring emotionally. We never feel that anyone involved in making this multimillion-dollar, two-hour-and-twenty-one-minute spectacle had any real affection for the story. The screenplay, by Pen Densham and John Watson, is a mishmash of halfhearted dramatizations of episodes from the legend and equally halfhearted nods to contemporary attitudes. If the movie had an exuberant spirit—as the 1938 "Adventures of Robin Hood," with Errol Flynn, had, in near-manic overabundance—we'd be more inclined to overlook the script's incoherence. But there's not much joy in evidence here. The direction, by Kevin Reynolds, is stolid and impersonal, and Kevin Costner seems miscast as Robin: he's not a forceful enough actor for this role. The merry men are an unmemorable lot; even Little John (Nick Brimble) and Friar Tuck (Michael McShane) don't make strong impressions, because they haven't been given anything interesting to do. (In this version, Little John loses [itals] his famous battle with Robin in the stream.) The audience seems to perk up only when Alan Rickman, as the villainous Sheriff of Nottingham, is on the screen. He gives a florid, theatrical performance—there's real glee in his malice. Also with Morgan Freeman, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Christian Slater, Michael Wincott, and Brian Blessed (who's so vivid in his brief scenes as Robin's father that we wish the movie were about him instead).—T.R. (7/1/91) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Cinema 3, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

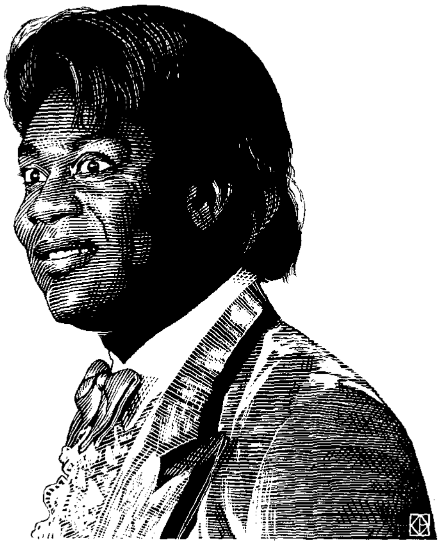
**Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll**—With Eric Bogosian, directed by John McNaughton. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Angelika Film Center, and Plaza.)

**Shane** (1953)—The Western stranger in town consciously turned into Galahad on the range. Superficially, this is a Western, but from Shane's knightly costume, from the way his horse canters, from the Agincourt music, it's all too recognizable as an attempt to create a myth. With chivalric purity as his motivation, the enigmatic Shane (Alan Ladd) defeats enemies twice his size—the largest is the Prince of Darkness himself, Jack Palance. The earth-loving Wyoming homesteaders befriended by Shane include Van Heflin, Jean Arthur as his wife, and Brandon deWilde as their child. This George Stevens film is over-planned and uninspired: Westerns are better when they're not so self-importantly self-conscious. However, audiences wept over the scene in which a dog mourns at his master's coffin, and Jean Arthur's farewell handshake to Shane—whom she loves—brought forth sniffles. Brandon deWilde's final cry, "Shane," was heard for years wherever kids played. With Edgar Buchanan, Elisha Cook, Jr., Ben Johnson, and Emile Meyer. The screenplay is by A. B. Guthrie, Jr., from Jack Schaefer's novel. The cinematography, by Loyal Griggs, won the Academy Award; this must have struck him as a black joke, because Paramount, in order to take advantage of the new fashion for the wide screen, had mutilated the compositions by cutting off the top and bottom.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 19.)

**Slacker**—There is no joy in Austin—at least not in the seedy collegiate neighborhood of Richard Linklater's enervating piece of local colorlessness. There's precious little originality, either, despite the resolute nonconformity of Linklater's neo-beatnik characters. Each follows the familiar beat of a different bongo. Sociopaths, Elvis, the J.F.K. assassination, the Lincoln Brigade, Madonna—the same topics come up off campus in Austin as in Cambridge, Mass., or Madison. What's worse, the sophomoric surrealism of the slackers' dialogue is all that Linklater gives you to hang onto. With dozens of one-shot characters who take over for a scene, then pass the baton to the next no-brain, the structure begs comparison to Buñuel's late black comedies, like "The Phantom of Liberty." But watching this movie is more like being stranded in the switchboard of a nightmare party line. The conversational leitmotifs—banal remarks on television and self-serving defenses of passivity—are, well, "heavy." It's tempting to call the film a straightfaced satire, but that would give it too much credit. There's nothing inside Linklater's deadpan.—M.S. (Angelika Film Center.)

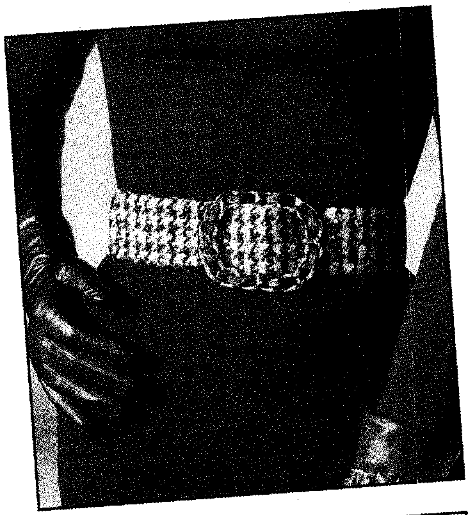
**Terminator 2: Judgment Day**—The killer cyborg who was played by Arnold Schwarzenegger in the original "Terminator" (1984) has returned—only this time he's the hero. The first film, which was written and directed by James Cameron, is one of the genre-movie classics of the eighties: a lean, witty science-fiction movie without great pretensions to significance. The sequel, also written (with William Wisher) and directed by Cameron, is far less satisfying. The picture is full of spectacular action sequences and dazzling special effects, but the narrative doesn't have the snap of the original's: it's lumbering and monotonous, and it carries a heavy-handed anti-nuke message. The old, Schwarzenegger-model Terminator (the T-800) has been superseded by a more advanced model, the T-1000 (Robert Patrick), who is sleeker and more versatile. T-800, who represented the ultimate in destructive technology in the first film, seems almost human here: compared to T-1000, he's a vulnerable guy (or guyoid). The whole movie is based on the insane conceit that Arnold Schwarzenegger is the *underdog*. That's a stretch. Also with Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Joe Morton. Effects by Stan Winston and many, many others.—T.R. (7/29/91) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

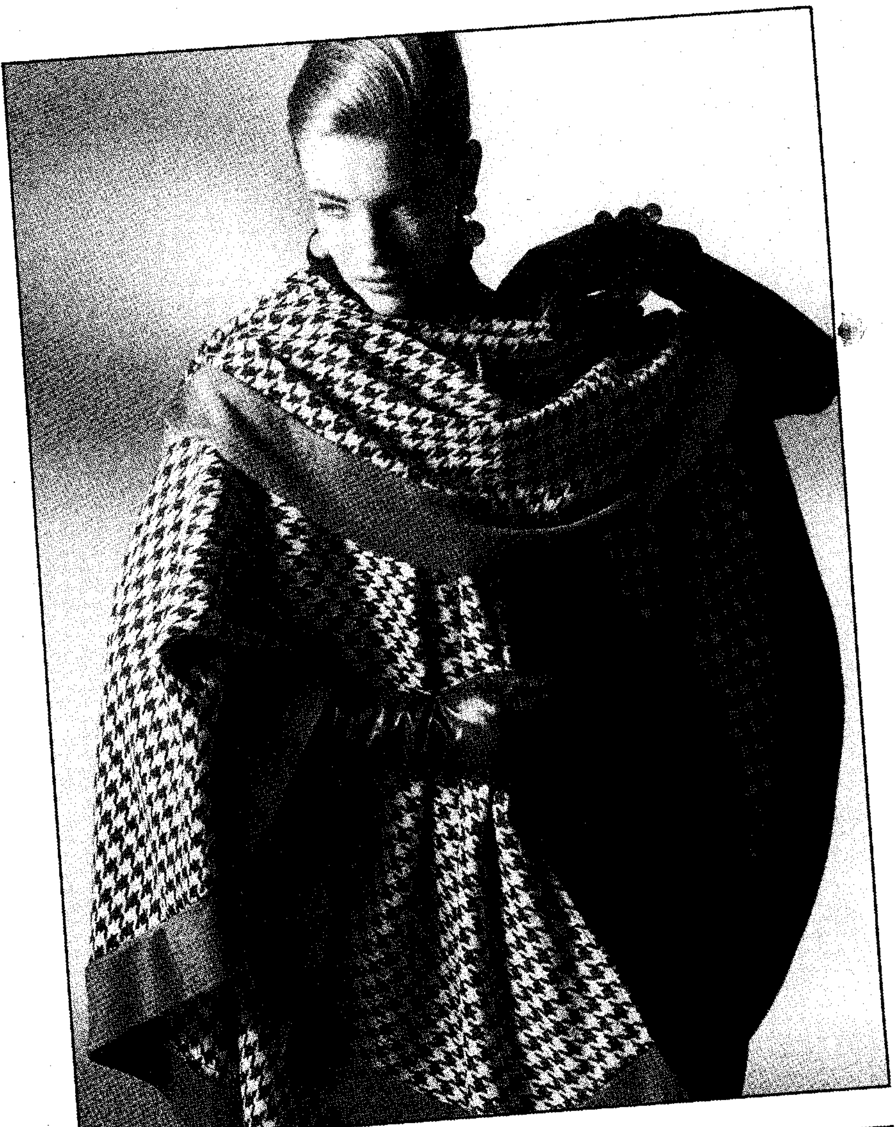
**Thelma & Louise**—The heroines, played by Geena Davis (Thelma) and Susan Sarandon (Louise), are a couple of Arkansas women who set out for a weekend in the mountains and wind up speeding through the Southwest, on the run from the law. (Louise has murdered a man who tried to rape Thelma in a roadhouse parking lot.) The movie, written by Callie Khouri and directed by Ridley Scott, is designed to keep pushing the women farther and farther out there—past the point of no return, into the vanishing point of a vast Western landscape, and, finally, over the edge of the world. It's a pretty shameless outlaw fantasy; the feminist justification that the script provides for the heroines' behavior doesn't make their actions any less preposterous. But you can recognize the crudeness of the movie's narrative devices and still have an awfully good time. There's an exhilarating ease and intuitiveness in the way Davis and Sarandon work together, and the camera lingers on them as if it couldn't get enough of them. Scott's direction gives the story a pleasantly dreamy quality: when Thelma and Louise are on the road, the movie has the look of a mirage, a jewelled shimmer that keeps us half hypnotized. He turns Davis and Sarandon into outlaw princesses, and they're so vivid and likable that they carry us past the plot's most obvious contrivances; a little disbelief seems a small price to pay for being allowed to remain in their company. Also with Harvey Keitel, Brad Pitt, Christopher McDonald, Michael Madsen, Timothy Carhart, and Stephen Tobolowsky. The luminous cinematography is by Adrian Biddle.—T.R. (6/3/91) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and 57th St. Playhouse.)


*Lenny Henry in "True Identity"*

**Trust**—This independent film by the young writer and director Hal Hartley ("The Unbelievable Truth") takes place entirely in a white, middle-class neighborhood in a forlorn-looking Long Island town. His Long Island is a place where anything can happen and almost nothing does—where parents and childen, living together in tight quarters, torment and negotiate with each other just to create some drama for themselves. This picture tells the story of the strange relationship—part romance, part tutorial, part vaudeville act—between a pair of suburban losers, Matthew (Martin Donovan) and Maria (Adrienne Shelly). He's a thirtyish, chain-smoking depressive who lives with his widowed father (John MacKay). She's an adolescent bimbo who, when she announces to her family and her boyfriend that she's pregnant, discovers that this persona isn't going to be much use to her; she decides that she has to change her life. The story moves by surprising leaps, with the rhythm of the main characters' erratic, uncertain progress toward an awareness of possibilities beyond their limited, cramped experience. Hartley keeps the film's tone dry, and makes the threatening, pervasive nothingness of the milieu grotesquely funny. His style is a risky blend of formal abstraction and dramatic realism, and it demands resourceful actors. Donovan has a gangling, dishevelled charm, and his bummed-out line readings are superbly timed; and Shelly brings off Maria's transformation from teen-age temptress to serious young woman with extraordinary ease. Under Hartley's direction, they seem to be inventing an acting style for a brand-new genre: the existentialist comedy of manners. Also with Merritt Nelson, Edie Falco, and Gary Sauer.—T.R. (8/12/91) (Angelika Film Center.)

# Picking Up The Check





Wrap it, drape it, cinch it, carry it: houndstooth take-outs set the pattern for fall. Clockwise from upper right: Wrap by A. Brod, $72; beret, $20; Jill Stuart handbag, $165; Weave O'The Irish muffler, $35; Santi gloves, $28; Jill Stuart belt, $90. Accessories on the Main Floor, Herald Square. Call Linda Lee at Macy's By Appointment: 212-560-4181. Outside NY State: 1-800-343-0121. Use your Macy's charge.

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THE NEW YORKER

# THE TALK OF THE TOWN

## *Notes and Comment*

IT has been more than a year and a half since United States troops invaded Panama in an operation, code-named Just Cause, that, according to some estimates, caused a thousand Panamanian fatalities, destroyed a billion and a half dollars' worth of property, and left twenty-three American servicemen dead. On the morning of December 20, 1989, President Bush explained to the American people that he had been compelled to transform the United States military into a federal posse, with orders to bring General Noriega to justice, for several reasons: to safeguard American lives, to protect the Panama Canal, and to defend democracy. The President also cast the invasion as a battle in the war against drugs. General Manuel Noriega, he pointed out, was "an indicted drug trafficker," and he implied that the General's removal would help stem the flow of drugs into American cities. Ironically, the invasion appears to have had the opposite effect. This past July, the General Accounting Office reported that money laundering has "flourished" in Panama, and that since Operation Just Cause drug trafficking in Panama "may have doubled."

Last week, in Miami, jury selection for the long-awaited trial of General Noriega began. Federal prosecutors argued in pretrial briefs that "this is first and last a drug case," but, whether or not Noriega is ultimately found guilty, his trial is likely to provide a chilling post mortem on United States foreign-policy goals and priorities during its long crusade against the perceived threat of Communism. The more evidence the prosecution presents of how General Noriega turned his country into what one of his associates called a "narco-kleptocracy"—how he received millions in commissions from the Medellín cartel for laundering drug money, permitted the Colombians to build cocaine-processing plants in Panama's jungles, and used members of his own staff to smuggle drugs—the more difficult it will be for United States officials to explain why the General was at the very same time receiving hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of United States taxpayers' dollars from the American intelligence community. Already, the government has been forced to admit that even as Noriega was trafficking in narcotics he was "a paid asset" of the United States military and "held a paid relationship with the C.I.A." United States paychecks made out directly to Noriega may add up to only three hundred and twenty thousand dollars, but Noriega's lawyers say that the C.I.A. provided the General with "project funds" of eleven million.

In return for this money, General Noriega rendered services to a number of United States agencies. He allowed the Pentagon to conduct secret military operations in Panamanian territory; he spied on other nations, including Fidel Castro's Cuba, for the C.I.A.; he aided the Reagan Administration's covert war against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. He also assisted the United States Drug Enforcement Agency, by turning in drug runners whom he found uncoöperative. These activities are expected to provide the core of General Noriega's defense—the contention that his nefarious activities were known to his American intelligence handlers and were at times sanctioned by them, as part of his contribution to the United States battle against radicalism in Latin America.

The question of who knew what, and when, has already proved embarrassing for President Bush, who has claimed that he did not know of Noriega's illicit operations until the General was indicted, by federal grand juries in Florida, in February, 1988. As director of the C.I.A. in 1976, however, and as Ronald Reagan's Vice-President from 1981 through 1988, Mr. Bush was in official positions where briefings would almost certainly have included a clear picture of the General's criminality and corruption. By the early nineteen-eighties, according to Norman Bailey, a onetime member of President Reagan's National Security Council staff, there existed "not a 'smoking gun' but rather a twenty-one cannon barrage of evidence" regarding General Noriega's involvement in drug-smuggling activities. Indeed, as early as 1972 the Nixon Administration's Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs had considered "total and complete immobilization" of Noriega—a euphemism for assassination—as one method of halting his narcotics operations. But the rest of Washington ignored Noriega's growing narco-business then and

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went on ignoring it until June 12, 1986, when the *Times* printed a front-page story by Seymour Hersh under the headline "PANAMA STRONGMAN SAID TO TRADE IN DRUGS, ARMS AND ILLICIT MONEY." And even then high-ranking Reagan Administration officials were willing not only to look the other way but to help Noriega, as a quid pro quo for his pandering to their No. 1 foreign-policy obsession—the overthrow of the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

Among the troubling stories that emerged during the 1989 trial of Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North was that in August, 1986, two months after the *Times* article appeared, Noriega approached North through an emissary and offered a deal. According to a document submitted as evidence by the government, Noriega said that in return for "a promise from the USG to help clean up Noriega's image" and a commitment to lift the ban on arms sales he would "assassinate the Sandinista leadership" and undertake sabotage operations inside Nicaragua. Vice-Admiral John Poindexter, then President Reagan's national-security adviser, ruled out assassination but, according to trial documents, suggested that "Panamanian assistance with sabotage would be another story." North later reported that he met with Noriega in London on September 22nd and worked out a plan whereby Noriega would "try to take immediate actions" against Nicaraguan installations, including an airport, a cargo facility, and the nation's only oil refinery. Those operations never came to fruition, however, because of the Iran-Contra scandal, which ended the government careers of North and Poindexter, and left General Noriega without his protectors.

The image of the United States consorting with, paying, and even protecting dope peddlers of General Noriega's ilk is not what Americans think is meant when our government says it is promoting freedom abroad and protecting our national security at home. Yet such corruption of moral and political values is a large part of the reality of the "dirty wars" that have been fought on our behalf—usually without our knowledge or consent—in the name of safeguarding democracy. Our policymakers seem to believe that there is no connection between the end and the means—that our principles can remain uncorrupted even when we defend them with methods that are debased.

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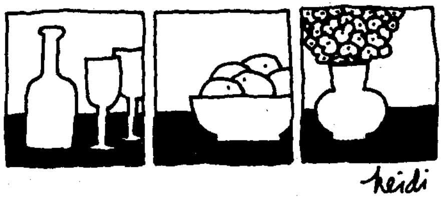
## *Determined*

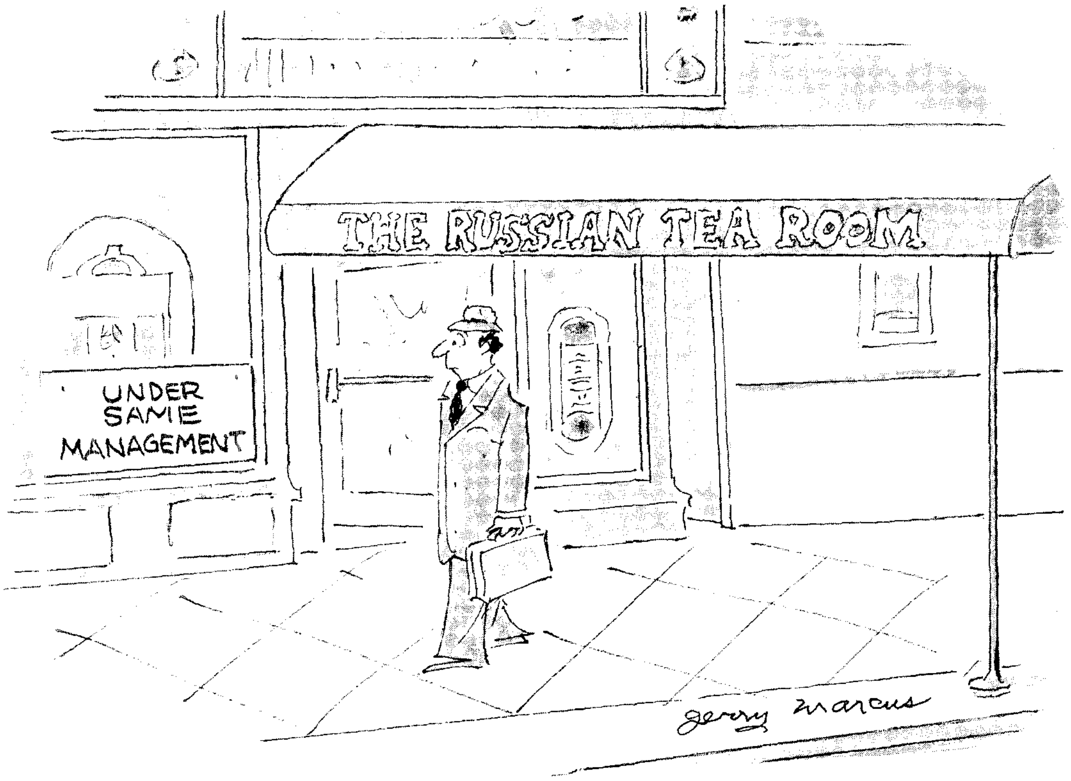
THE women who are credited with founding American modern dance—Loie Fuller, Isadora Duncan, and Ruth St. Denis—differed from one another in essential respects, but they all liked to keep their sight lines high. Sometimes you'll find pictures of them with their heads tossed back and their arms flung forward, giving themselves up to the ecstasy of dancing. This is usually when they're depicted onstage, or in the middle of a field or an ancient ruin—some place where they aren't likely to run into a fire hydrant or a trash can. In more confined situations, they simply throw back their eyes, the way you do when the ophthalmologist gives you eyedrops.

There was more to their genius than the high sight lines, of course, but there was never less. That's one of the ways you can tell these women from Ted Shawn. Ted Shawn is *the* sole guy to have helped found modern dance, and, like most guys of his time, he wouldn't have been caught dead throwing back anything but a hardball or a left hook. In fact, there is a photograph of him, taken early in his career and showing him with his first teacher and dancing partner, Hazel Wallack, in which he looks like a prizefighter holding up his sparring partner. "Hazel was the third girl I asked to marry me but the first to whom I was formally engaged," Shawn wrote in his memoir, "One Thousand and One Night Stands," and he went on, "Cupid, however, did not triumph over Terpsichore. In time I found myself in artistic disagreement with Hazel, an unyielding exponent of the classical ballet." Had Hazel yielded, American modern dance would probably not be what it is today; namely, an entity that is revving up to spend a good part of the fall celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Ted Shawn. On October 21, 1891, this historic figure came into the world, as Edwin Myers Shawn, and on January 9, 1972, he left it, as, variously, Papa Shawn, "the Father of American Dance," and—by decree of the King of Denmark, honoring him for his support of the Danish Ballet—Ted Shawn, Knight of Dannebrog.



These celebrations wouldn't amount to much if it weren't for Jane Sherman, who has written several books about the company, so without further ado we'd like you to meet her. She has a cloud of white hair and a beautiful smile, which hasn't changed since she joined the Denishawn Dancers, in 1925, as a highly principled seventeen-year-old. Miss Sherman is one of the last surviving members of the Denishawn company, and the sole Denishawn alumna prepared to coach any of the repertory that was choreographed by Denishawn's co-founders—Ruth St. Denis and her husband, Ted Shawn. (Currently, Miss Sherman is setting dances on a small, dedicated New Jersey group called the Denishawn Repertory Dancers.) The other day, we drove up to New Paltz, where Miss Sherman lives now, and there she talked to us about Ted Shawn.

"You have to remember that I saw Ted Shawn during my adolescence, from age thirteen through eighteen," Miss Sherman cautioned. "It was pure hero worship. He was gorgeous to look at, and to everybody he came across like a house afire. So if you ask me what he was like as a dancer, I can't tell you. It's like asking a bobby-soxer, 'Can Frank Sinatra sing?' Who cared? And that was true not only of me but of much of the audience. They were just overwhelmed by his personality. Any films you see of him now show him when he was already an old, fat man, and you must not judge by them what he was and could do. In his prime, he was just fantastic. If there's one word that would apply to Shawn, I think it would be 'determined'—not to be successful but to be a *dancer*, and a force in dance. It all started when he got diphtheria, at age eighteen, and was told afterward that he couldn't walk. He was *going* to walk, even if he had to make a fool of himself by taking ballet lessons—a great big guy, six feet two—with a lot of little ballerinas. And he always had a problem with his weight. The shape of his face was kind of soft, pudgy. It wasn't a Gregory Peck face. But he came across as one hundred per cent macho, which in those days was important. Today, of course, there would be no stigma attached to his homosexuality. And he always chose to do strong and powerful subjects. His flamenco dances were astounding. He did a beautiful ‘Adonis Plastique,’ completely nude except for a fig leaf and a white wig, with his body covered in white paint. It sounds like horrible, campy moving statuary, but it was really beautiful.”



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Miss Sherman took a breath and looked toward the ceiling. Then she said, “Now, Miss Ruth was the great improviser. She was fantastic. Of course, she could never *remember* what she improvised. Many times, as they were performing together, he would be whispering, ‘Now do the three steps up here and turn back to me.’ Shawn could be very tough in class, very strict. I never had a class with Miss Ruth. Her memorable line went ‘I can't teach, but I can inspire like hell.’ Shawn doesn't get the credit he should. He choreographed way over half of the Denishawn repertory. Miss Ruth was great in her solos and in what we called her ‘ballet ideas,’ but I always had the feeling that when she came to do group things in a ballet—‘Spirit of the Sea’ or ‘Ishtar’—Shawn was back there helping her. She could do the role of Ishtar, the star, but she couldn't quite handle the groupings.”

Miss Sherman thought for a moment, then shook her head. “I don't think you can see Ted Shawn for what he contributed to modern dance, because there's not enough evidence left,” she said. “The closest you can get is the films of the group of male dancers he founded after he left Denishawn. And, again, those are bad silent movies. But just take the ‘Cosmic Dance of Siva’ that he did for Denishawn. He performed that over forty weeks of one-night stands when Denishawn toured with ‘The Ziegfeld Follies of 1927,’ and he stopped the show almost every time. You'd never believe it if you saw what was around him—the comedians and the tap dancers.”

After a brief pause, Miss Sherman said, “I have to say another thing for Shawn. He broke down racial barriers, and that, in its way, was as progressive and advanced as his championship of the right of men to dance. On the road with his troupe of male dancers, he did an eighteen-minute solo called ‘John Brown Sees the Glory.’ He did it all through the South: Birmingham, Biloxi—terrible places, racially speaking. He did it when they got threats from the audience and the newspapers and the Daughters of the Confederacy. He was opportunistic at times. And ambitious. He never felt he got his due recognition—so any little thing he was accorded, like having his name put on a pillar of the New York Public Library, he treasured. And he was right, in a sense: he was always overpowered by Miss Ruth. Since his death, of course, the whole story has come out about his intimate relationship with the dancer Barton Mumaw. And yet, according to people who would know, Shawn and Miss Ruth had a wonderful relationship, too, in every way—while it lasted. The company was never aware of the depth of their struggle. We saw some outbursts; they were temperamental people. But none of us got close to either of them. It isn't so much that they were cold as that they were so preoccupied, so busy, that they didn't have time.”

## *Thwack*

A YOUNG man we know writes: I played golf when I was twelve and thirteen, but then I stopped. For one thing, I was terrible. For another, it was 1969. Richard Nixon played golf and Jerry Garcia didn't, and the war in Vietnam seemed not entirely un-golf-related, and so forth. This summer, though, I took it up again. I joined the little nine-hole golf club in the small Connecticut town where I live, and I bought shoes, a bag, a glove, and a lot of other stuff. I already had some clubs. For about a year, I had kept them behind a chair in my study, and I had begun to enjoy thinking of myself as the sort of person who just has a bunch of golf clubs lying around. Then, one day, a friend invited me to play. I joined the club the following day, and, even though I'm still terrible, I now go out several times a week.

Unfortunately, the golf season in my part of the country is winding down. It's already much too dark to play at six in the morning—my favorite tee time in July and August—and I've begun carrying a sweater in my golf bag. For the first time in my life, I can understand why a person might move to Florida. I've also begun to think that I won't mind being thirty years older than I am now, because then I can live in one of those golf-course condominiums, wear golf clothes all the time, and drive to the grocery store in a cart. Meanwhile, though, I'm stuck in a place where it sometimes snows in October. That thought depressed me, but one day not long ago I made a discovery.

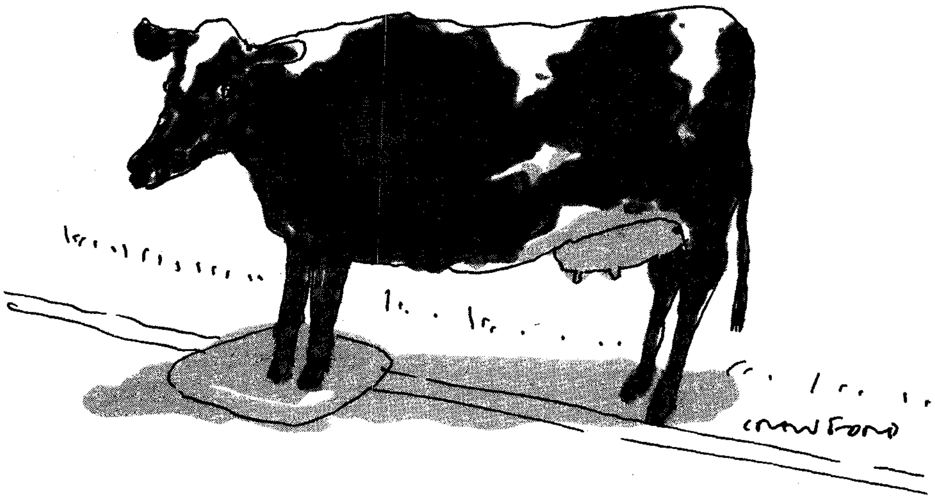
It was a Sunday, and I had an appointment in New York at eleven. I got up at five-thirty and played eighteen holes, finishing at about eight-thirty. Then I took a quick shower at home and headed for the city. As I drove, I practiced my golf grip on the steering wheel and reran my round in my mind. I went to my appointment. Then I drove to Brooklyn to have lunch with my brother and his wife. My brother was the captain of his golf team in college. He's upset with me because I get to play a lot more than he does now, even though I'm so terrible. We talked about that for a while, and we talked about golf in general, and then we walked over to the Eastern Athletic Club, on Clark Street. The club has two computerized golf simulators set up in an old squash court, and my brother and I signed up to play.

The golf simulators are made by a California company called InGolf. Each one has a big vinylized-canvas screen—about thirteen feet wide and ten feet tall—onto which are projected full-color views of real holes, including the seventeenth at Sawgrass and the eighteenth at Pebble Beach. The pictures are surprisingly realistic. The flags on the greens flap in the randomly generated breeze, and the trees cast shadows. You tee up a ball eight feet from the screen and hit it into the picture, producing a disconcertingly loud *thwack*. Sensors behind the screen measure the speed of the ball and the location of the impact, and other sensors—set in the floor, just ahead of the tee—measure the ball's horizontal and vertical spin. The computer pulls all this information together, and an image of a soaring ball appears in the picture at the point of impact. If the ball hits a tree, it bounces off. If it lands in the water, it makes a splash.

One of the best things about the InGolf machine is that it calculates yardage. Every time you hit the ball, the computer tells you how far it went and how much farther it has to go. The picture on the screen is always oriented so that the flag is straight ahead, but by pressing keys on the console you can shift the view to the right or the left. This is useful when, for example, you have to knock your ball sidewise to get it back on the fairway after slicing it into a grove of trees. (When I put one of my shots behind a tree and asked my brother what I should do to avoid hitting the trunk on my next shot, he said, "Aim for it.")

Last winter, my brother played in an indoor-golf league. He said that it was mildly embarrassing to stand around in the club drinking beer and eating Doritos while people with big muscles trotted back and forth between the racquetball courts and the Nautilus machines. But mild embarrassment is a part of real golf, too. My brother says the club should install a treadmill next to the golf simulators, so that you could pick up a golf bag and pretend to walk to your ball while you waited for your turn to hit. That way, you'd at least break a sweat.

When our game was over, I walked my brother to his apartment, then headed back to Connecticut. As I drove, I thought over my day, savoring my handful of good shots, both real and simulated, and brooding about my innumerable bad ones. Then, suddenly, I had a happy thought. When there's snow on the ground in January, it will be nice and cozy inside the Eastern Athletic Club. The drive is just a couple of hours each way, a little less if the roads are plowed.



NO RUNS NO HITS ONE COW LEFT ON

## *British Red Coat*

RECENTLY, we were in a room in which serious, intelligent men and women of a whole range of ages were expressing, on the one hand, a certain attractive dissatisfaction with their ability to envision a future for poetry and, on the other, the essential linkage between the Temptations and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and we found our mind drifting to something quite different. We kept on looking at a young woman's feet. The feet we are speaking of were bare and had colored toenails. We know now that the color is called British Red Coat. This is a kind of admission. Obviously, to know that, we had to ask the young woman in question, whose name is Melissa, what color it was she was wearing on her toes. Then we asked *other* people about colored toenails. There is no way around admitting that this is what we did. We even called Revlon—that was after we had gathered quite a bit of confidence concerning the matter—and what Revlon told us emphatically was that one never says "nail polish" but, rather, "nail enamel." Our source at Revlon says that it is like "beauty parlor" versus "salon"—no contest. She didn't enunciate any particular Revlon policy in regard to nail enamel on the toes. But lots of other people, we subsequently found out, had strong feelings.

First, we spoke again with Melissa herself, a young graduate of Bard College, twenty-three years old, who is looking for a job:

Q: Is British Red Coat the nail enamel you like better than all the rest?

A: It's something I can't live without.

Q: And where did you first see British Red Coat?

A: I was walking down the aisle in a little drugstore in New Jersey. There's nothing like it to get a girl going.

Q: Has your social life been affected by wearing nail enamel?

A: My social life has taken off. British Red Coat works like a charm. I get more compliments on it than I've had on anything in years. So I determined that it was blessed. It features prominently in conversation—an icebreaker. It's one of those things—when people don't know you, they see your toes and say "Wow!" And it's a nice little surprise when you take off your socks. It's good from a distance—little droplets of British Red Coat. There's not a lot that brings attention to your feet.

Q: Have you made new friends by discussing nail enamel?

A: Two. But that's a lot.

Q: Did your mother wear it?

A: I don't remember noticing my mother's nails.

Q: When do you first remember seeing nail enamel?

A: When I was a little kid—bright purple with glitter on it. A sixties, seventies thing. I was five or six or seven. I didn't pay attention to age then.

Q: Would you ever go out without nail enamel?

A: I wouldn't go out of the house without it. When you're in a boring corporate situation, you feel you have one up on them all—nice underwear and bright-red toenails.

Q: Is it disturbing when your nail enamel chips?

A: British Red Coat doesn't chip. I doesn't come into contact with corners.

Q: Do a lot of your friends wear it.

A: No.

Q: Do you think men like it?

A: My boyfriend confessed that he's always liked toenail polish.

•

And now a talk with a friend from Palm Beach:

Q: What is your favorite nail-enamel color?

A: Cherries in the Snow—Mummy's favorite. It's still there, in the stores, decades later.

Q: Do you like nail enamel best in summer?

A: No, winter. Pink, rosy toes look pretty stretched against the bleak white tub. Cherries in the snow.

•

Telephone interview with a dignified man:

D.M.: I've always been opposed to it. It's more arbitrary on feet than on hands, more barbaric. Not unlike a diamond in the side of your nose. It's a ritual disfigurement women insist upon. Toenail polish is unnatural and vulgar.

•

Interview with the dignified man, Part Two. At dinner:

Q: Where were you when you noticed nail enamel for the very first time?

A: They certainly didn't have it in my youth, seventy years ago. My grandmother used a sterling-silver buffer for nail powder in Hartford in 1920. I don't think there were colored nails in my youth. I remember my sister had pedicures, but I don't remember color.

Q: What else do you remember from when you were a little boy?

A: There were plenty of bare feet—Roman sandals. And there were movies. Tarzan and Jane were barefoot in the jungle. And I remember Carmel Myers in "Ben-Hur." Theda Bara and Carmel Myers.

Q: Would you say feet were an interest of yours?

A: I'm largely repelled by feet. "Beautiful are thy feet in *shoes*, O Princess." That's from the Song of Solomon.

Q: Is there any kind of foot you find pleasing?

A: The most beautiful is a baby's foot. Plump and rosy and boneless.

•

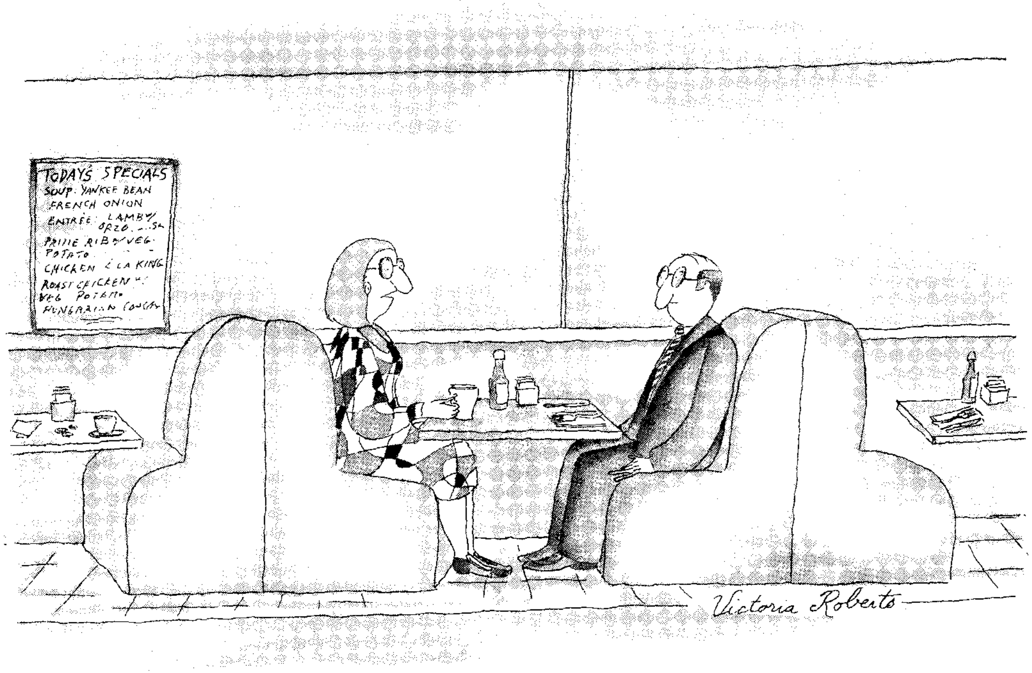
And a Midwesterner speaks:

Q: Do you think nail enamel looks cheap?

A: I haven't devoted a thought to it. But cheap? Oh, no, no, no, no, no.

Q: Did your mother ever wear it?

A: My *mother*? Are you kidding? Never, never, never.



"*A year nowhere near Provence.*"

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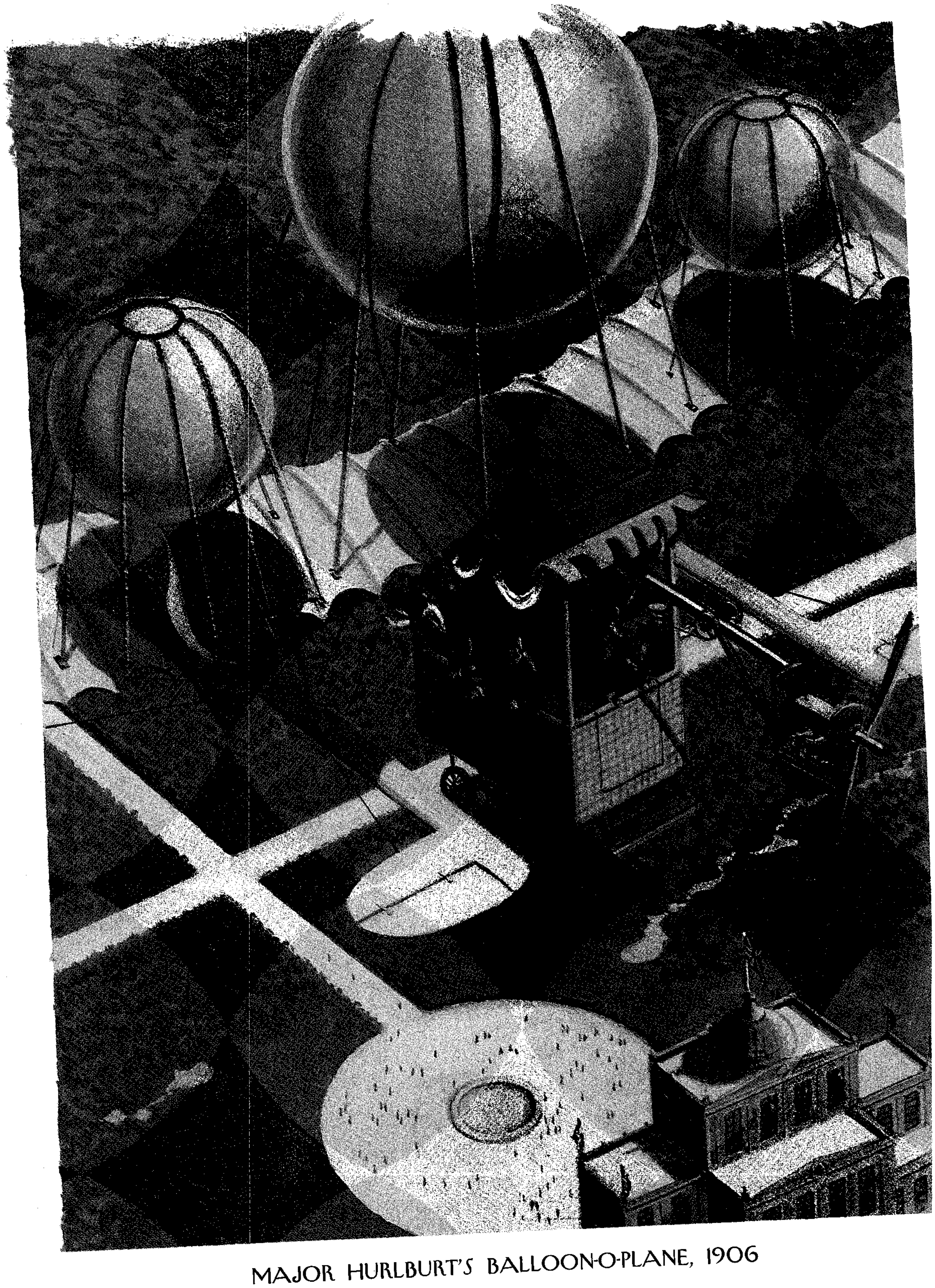
# GUNJIPOOR, ONCE UPON A TIME



MAJOR HURLBURT'S BALLOON-O-PLANE, 1906

PUFFY HURLBURT met Santos-Dumont on home leave and it changed everything. He returned to the regiment and sold his ponies and commandeered the polo field to build his damned balloon-o-plane contraption, which was nowhere near finished when the Viceroy came up to Gunjipoor that summer. But Puffy had such brass! And so—ready or not—it was up, up, and away, with a gondola full of chums, and right over the palace and the Viceroy's levee. Puffy planned a dramatic descent, and that was the rub: he hadn't the faintest idea how to land. The Vicereine did a watercolor later of the balloon-o-plane suspended there against that lurid Gunjipoor August sunset, party over, everyone long gone. The moment darkness set in, Puffy took out his Webley and shot himself down. Ignominy. —BRUCE MCCALL

# THE FRONT AND BACK PARTS OF THE HOUSE

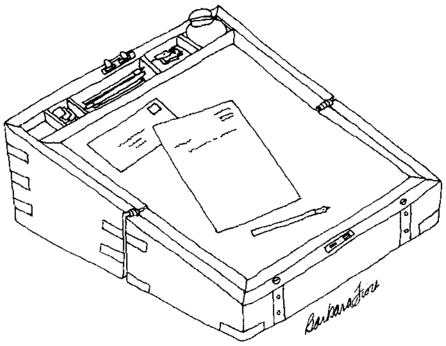
THOUGH it took me a while to realize it, I had a good father. He left the house early Tuesday morning carrying his leather grip, which was heavy with printed forms, and walked downtown to the railroad station. As the Illinois state agent for a small fire and windstorm insurance company he was expected to make his underwriting experience available to local agents in Freeport, Carbondale, Alton, Carthage, Dixon, Quincy, and so on, and to cultivate their friendship in the hope that they would give more business to his company. I believe he was well liked. Three nights out of every week he slept in godforsaken commercial hotels that overlooked the railroad tracks and when he turned over in the dark he heard the sound of the ceiling fan, and railway cars being shunted. He knew the state of Illinois the way I knew our house and yard.

He could have had a much better job in the Chicago office but my mother said Chicago was no place to raise children. When the offer came a second time, ten years later, my father accepted it. He was forty-four and ready to give up the hard life of a travelling man. He had to sell the house he and my stepmother had built, and lived in only a very short while, and she wept at the thought of leaving her family and Lincoln, yet in time she came to like living in Chicago. They lived there for twenty years. With my future in mind—he wasn't just talking—my father assured me solemnly that you get out of life exactly what you put into it. I took this with a grain of salt; a teacher in my high school in Chicago, a woman given to reading Mencken and *The American Mercury*, had explained to me that there are people who have always drawn the short end of the stick and will continue to. But for my father the maxim was true. He reserved a reasonable part of his life for his responsibilities to his family and his golf game, and everything else he put into the fire-insurance business. He ended up vice-president in charge of the Western Department, which satisfied his aspirations. When the presidency was offered to him he turned it down. It would have meant moving East, and he foresaw that in the New York office he would be confronted with problems he might not be able to deal with confidently.

A detached retina brought his career to a premature end. He and my stepmother moved back to Lincoln, to the same street but a different house. I was in my early forties and living in the country, just beyond the northern suburbs of New York City, and trying to make a living by writing fiction, when my father wrote me that it was about time I paid them a visit. He met me at the station, and as we drove into Park Place I saw that time is more than an abstract idea: maple and elm saplings that were staked against the wind when we moved away had become shade trees. I spent the first evening with my father and my stepmother, and next morning after breakfast I walked over to my Aunt Annette's. She was my mother's younger sister and they were very close. I loved going to her house because nothing ever changed there. When she sold it many years later because the stairs got to be too much for her, I felt the loss, I think, more than she did.

In that house the present had very little resonance. The things my aunt really cared about had all happened in the early years of her life. My Great-Grandfather Youtsey's farm on the Licking River, in Kentucky, where she spent every summer of her childhood, had passed out of the family. The Kentucky aunts and uncles and cousins she was so fond of she was not free to visit anymore. Her father and mother and my mother were all lying side by side in the cemetery.

In the front hall, under the stairs, there was a large framed engraving of the Colosseum, bought in Rome the year I was born. In the living room there were further reminders: Michelangelo's "Holy Family," the Bridge of Sighs, and a Louis XV glass cabinet full of curios. Lots of Lincoln people had been to Chicago, and some even to New York, but very few had any firsthand knowledge of what Europe was like—except the coal miners, and they didn't count. The sublime souvenirs kept their importance down through time.



Over the high living-room mantelpiece was a portrait-size tinted photograph of my Grandfather Blinn. I could almost but not quite remember him. When I stood and contemplated it I was defeated by the unseeing look that likenesses of dead people always seem to have. My Aunt Annette was his favorite child. To his boyhood on his father's cattle farm near St. Johnsbury, Vermont, and to the obstacles he surmounted in order to become a lawyer, the photograph offered no clue whatever. Nor did it convey what a warmhearted man he was. What it did suggest, if anybody wanted to look at it that way, was that in my uncle's house a dead man was held in greater esteem than he was.

My aunt had made what other members of the family considered a mistaken marriage, which she had long ago stopped discussing with anyone. If she had really wanted to she could have extricated herself from it. It was as if she believed in the irrevocability of choices, and was simply living with the one she had made as a young woman.

My Uncle Will Bates had graduated from Yale with a degree in civil engineering, and held a license to practice surveying, but he also had inherited several farms, and he was gone from six-thirty in the morning until late afternoon, making sure that his tenant farmers didn't do something that might be to their advantage but not his. I guess he was an intelligent man, but if one of the main elements in your character is suspicion, intelligence is more often than not misused. My aunt was a very beautiful woman and he loved her but her beauty was a torment to him. He did not want her to accept invitations of any kind and they never entertained. It upset him if she even went to the Friday-afternoon bridge club, because what if the hostess's husband were to leave his office early and come home?

Annette was alone in the house all day, with no one to talk to but the colored woman in the kitchen. Lula had a great many children and from time to time she quit in order to have another. Sometimes she just quit. Or my aunt fired her because she had failed to show up for too many mornings in a row. She was always eventually asked to come back, because my aunt needed her in the skirmishing that took place with my Uncle Will. The indignant things Annette didn't feel it was safe to say to him Lula, looking him straight in the eye, said. My uncle seldom took offense, perhaps because she was colored and his servant and not to be taken seriously, or perhaps because she was not afraid of him and so had his grudging respect. When my aunt couldn't find her glasses she borrowed Lula's, which, even though there was only one lens and that had a crack in it, worked well enough. And when she felt like crying Lula let her cry.

Like the house, my aunt changed very little over the years. Her hair turned gray, and she was heavier than she was when I was a child, but her clear blue eyes were still the eyes of a young woman.

I opened the front door and called out and she answered from the sun porch. My feelings poured out of me, as always when I was with her. Suddenly she interrupted what I was telling her to say, "I have a surprise for you. Hattie Dyer is in the kitchen."

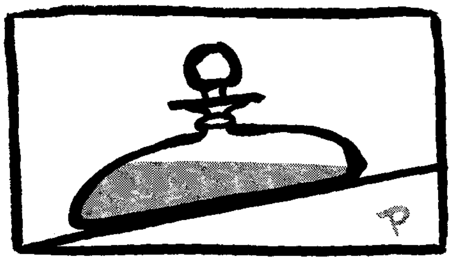
I got up from my chair and for the length of time it took me to go through the house blindly like a sleepwalker I had the beautiful past in my hand. When I walked into the kitchen I saw a gray-haired colored woman standing at the sink and I said "Hattie!" and went and put my arms around her.

I don't know what I expected. I hadn't thought that far. Or imagined what her response might be.

There was no response. Any more than if I had hugged a wooden post. She did not even look at me. As I backed away from her in embarrassment at my mistake she did not do or say anything that would make it easier for me to get from the kitchen to the front part of the house where I belonged.

If I had acted differently, I asked myself later—if I had been less concerned with my own feelings and allowed room for hers, if I had put out my hand instead of trying to embrace her, would the truce between the front and the back parts of the house have held? Would she have wiped her hand on her apron and taken my hand? And said (whether it was true or not) that she remembered me? And listened politely to my recollections of the time when she worked in our kitchen? And then perhaps I would have perceived that her memories of that time were vague or nonexistent, so that we very soon ran out of things to say?

I didn't tell my aunt what had happened. I was afraid she would say "Why did you put your arms around her?" and I didn't know why. Also, I thought she might be provoked at Hattie, and I didn't want to have to consider her feelings as well as my own.



The next time I was in Lincoln, a year or two later, Lula was back and saw me coming up the walk and opened the front door to me.

TWICE a day, with dragging footsteps—for he was an old man—Alfred Dyer came up the brick driveway of our house on Ninth Street to clean out the horse's stall, and feed and curry him, and shovel coal into the furnace. His daughter Hattie kept house for my Grandmother Blinn at the end of her life when, immobilized by dropsy, she sat beside the cannel-coal fire in the back parlor, unable to arrive at the name of one of her children or grandchildren without running through the entire list of them. I don't remember ever being alone with her, though I expect I was. Or anything she ever said to me. I was five years old when she died. The day after her funeral my mother sat down at the kitchen table with Hattie and when they had finished

## THE VERY RICH HOURS

Mouse ears above the château hedge!
It's de rigueur on the hardhats
under contract to the magic land.
Jackhammers unnerve the flower beds.
O Disney, you have found Paris.
Your minions tread an ancient ground.
The enchanted castle shall be drawn
from the *dévotions* of the duc de Berry,
and the passionate and lucid city
welcomes a dream that is not a dream
of the docile Seine, or of the meaning
of thinking, or the one with the man
in uniform that lured my grandmother,
sixteen, *si gentille,* to migraines
in a land of iceberg lettuce.

Sitting on the Persian rug,
where scenes of glory faded
in the fertile Midwestern sun,
however hard she tried to teach
us Mouseketeers about the good and evil
spired cities and how Abelard preached
in the gutter of Notre-Dame
and was undone by love,
we only saw America bounding about
the edges of the brilliant pages,
so sweet, ageless, and insistent,
like a puppy in a magic kingdom,
or an aberration of the vision:
no matter how we turned our heads,
it stayed.

—EVELYN REILLY

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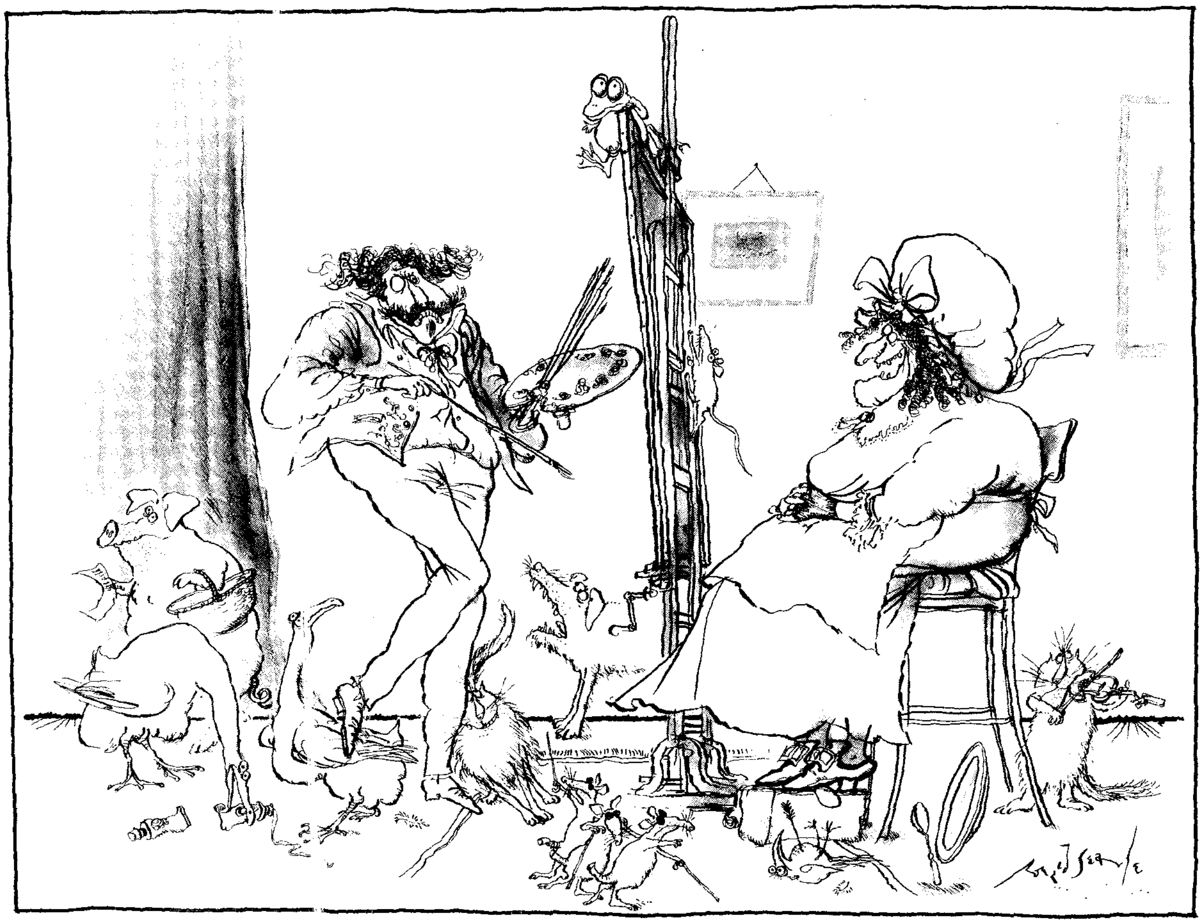


CROSSED PATHS

*Whistler Meets Mother Goose*

• •

talking about the situation in that house my mother asked her if she would like to come across the street and work in ours.

Hattie was a good cook when she came to us and she learned effortlessly anything my mother chose to teach her. She was paid five dollars a week. If you take into consideration the fact that it was one-twelfth of my father's annual salary, it doesn't seem so shocking.

The week took its shape from my father's going away and returning, but otherwise every day was a repetition of other days, with, occasionally, an event intruding upon the serenity of the expected. My older brother came down with chicken pox and I caught it from him. Or we had company. Or the sewing woman settled down in an empty bedroom and, with her mouth full of pins, arranged tissue-paper patterns and scraps of dress material on the headless dress form. Sometimes my mother's friends came of an afternoon and the tea cart was wheeled into the living room and they sat drinking tea and talking as if their lives depended on it, and I would go off upstairs to play and come down an hour later to find them gone and Hattie washing the teacups.

I knew that Hattie was married, and that her husband's name was Fred Brummel. Monday mornings two shy children that I knew were hers came to the back door with an express wagon and Hattie gave them our washing, tied up in a sheet, for her mother to do. Mrs. Dyer lived in a small one-story house on Elm Street, near the intersection at the foot of Ninth Street hill. I assumed that when Hattie finished the supper dishes and closed the outside kitchen door behind her, that was where she went. It may or may not have been true. After three or four days Mrs. Dyer sent the washing back, white as snow and folded in such a way that it gave my mother pleasure as she put it away in the upstairs linen closet.

There were places in that house that I went to habitually, the way animals repeat their rounds: the window seat in the library, the triangular space behind a walnut Victorian sofa in the living room, the unfurnished bedroom over the kitchen. And if I was suddenly at loose ends because the life had gone out of the toys I was playing with, I would find my mother and be gathered onto her lap and consoled. If she was not home I would wander out onto the back porch and listen to the upward spiralling sound of the locusts.

The dog went to my mother when he wasn't sure we all liked him as much as it is possible for a dog to be liked, and felt better after she had talked to him. One year, my brother, who was four years older than I, had a running argument with her about whether he was ten or, as he insisted, eleven. If in the dead of winter my father opened his three-tiered metal fishing box and sorted through the flies, he chose the room where she was to do it in. When summer came she packed a picnic hamper, and my father brought the horse and carriage around to the high curbing in front of the house, and against a disapproving background of church bells we drove out into the country to a walnut grove with a stream running through it. My mother sat on a plaid lap rug and pulled in one sunfish after another while my father tramped upstream casting for bass. We could have been the only people on earth. I think my mother enjoyed those long drowsy fishing expeditions but in any case she did whatever it made him happy to do. How much he loved her I heard in his voice whenever he called to her. And how much she loved him I saw in her face when he arrived on the front porch on Friday afternoon and we all came out of the house to greet him. As my father stood with his arms around us, the dog wormed his way past my legs so that his presence, too, would be recognized.

The Christmas holly that the first grade had cut out of red and green paper and pasted on the schoolroom windows was replaced by George Washington's hatchet. When we looked at the teacher we also saw the calendar on the wall behind her desk: April 1, 1915—April Fools' Day.

I have learned to read. I can read sentences out of the evening paper. The big black headlines are often about the war between Germany and the Allies. From the window seat in the library I watch as my father stands and holds an opened-out page of the Lincoln *Evening Courier* across the upper part of the fireplace so the chimney won't smoke. (The war between *us* broke out when I was three or four years old. I woke up in the night with a parched throat and called out—it was by no means the first time this had happened—for a drink. And waited for my mother's footsteps and the bathroom glass against my dry lips. Instead, his voice, from across the hall, said, "Oh, get it yourself!") The newspaper catches fire and floats up the chimney, and I pull the curtain around me in order to peer out at the darkness and the piles of snow. In May, where the piles of dirty snow had been, the flowering almond is in bloom. It has suckered and spread through the wire fence into the Kiests' yard. Do the flowers on that side belong to them or to us?

D. W. Griffith's "Birth of a Nation" is showing at the movie theatre downtown and there are scenes in it that have made all the colored people in Lincoln angry. I am told to stay out of the kitchen.

The sentences we are called on to read out loud in class are longer and more complicated. We have to memorize the forty-eight states and their capitals, and the countries of South America. With a pencil behind his ear, my father goes through an accumulation of inspection slips, making a check mark now and then, and hands them to me to alphabetize. (Spreading them around me on the rug, I am proud to be of help to him.)

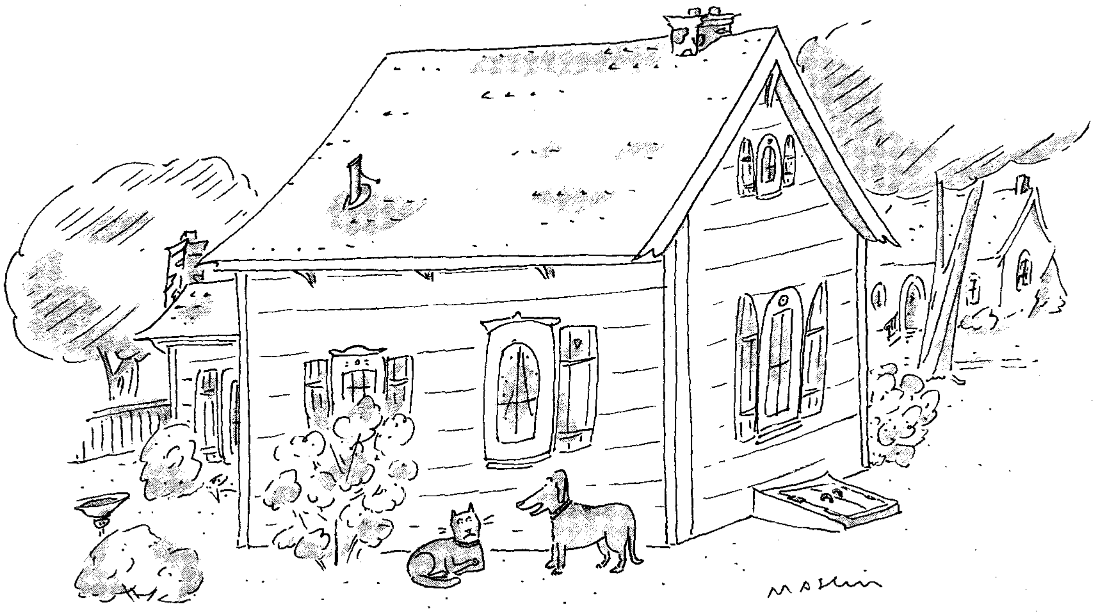
Slumped down in her chair, my mother feels with the toe of her shoe for the buzzer that is concealed under the dining-room rug. My brother and I find her searching hilarious. My father wonders why she just doesn't buy a little bell she can ring. In the end she has to give up, and calls out to the kitchen. The pantry door swings open and Hattie appears to clear away the plates and bring the dessert. She, too, thinks it's funny that the buzzer is never where it is supposed to be.

HOW many years was Hattie with us? Five, by my calculations. One day I went out to the kitchen for a drink of water and saw her daughter Thelma at the kitchen sink with an apron on. She said she had come to work for us. She was twelve years old but tall for her age. I asked my mother where Hattie was and my mother said, "She's been having trouble with her husband and moved to Chicago." My mother didn't say what the trouble was and I assumed it was one of the things that are not explained to children. But I felt the trouble must be serious if Hattie had to go away. And her absence made me aware of an unpleasant possibility: things could change.

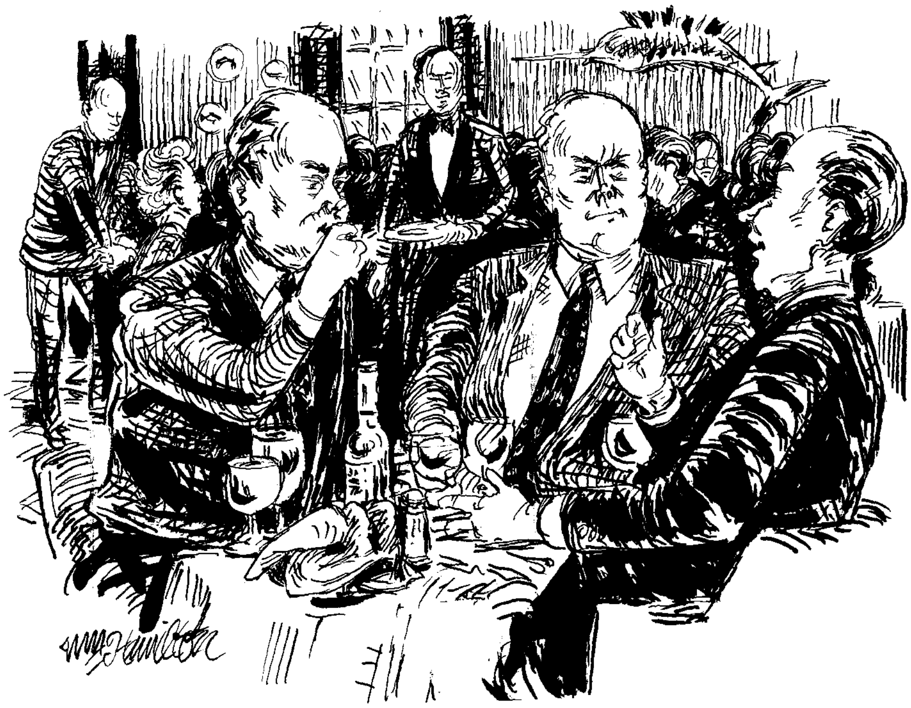
To everything that my mother said to Thelma she answered "Yes, ma'am" and "No, ma'am," but as though she were hearing it from a great distance, and she moved with the slowness of a person whose heart is somewhere else. My mother detected a film of grease on all the dishes and spoke to her about it. When there was no improvement she decided that Thelma wasn't ever going to be like Hattie and let her go.

The good-natured farm girl who was in our kitchen after that was taking classes at night so she could pass an examination and work in the post office. My mother was satisfied with her but spoke regretfully of Hattie, who knew what she wanted done without having to be told.

The school calendar has marched straight on to the fall of the year 1918. We have learned how to do long division. The women who come to our house in the afternoon put their tea-



*"You may never have hissed at me, but it's certainly been implied."*



*"I've always found enough to keep me busy right here on the Atlantic Rim."*

• •

cups aside and hem diapers as they sit gossiping. They all know what my mother has told me in confidence: that I am going to have a baby brother or a baby sister. They also know—in a small town there was no way for such a thing not to be known—that my mother had a difficult time when my older brother was born, and again with me. Only my Aunt Annette knew that at this time she had premonitions of dying.

My mother hopes that the baby will be a girl, and I am sure that what my mother wants to have happen will happen. Nothing turned out the way anybody hoped or expected it to. My younger brother was born in a hospital in Bloomington during the height of the epidemic of Spanish influenza. Toward the end of the first week in January, Alfred Dyer, coming up the driveway to tend the furnace, cannot have failed to see the funeral wreath on the door.

"There is no cure but time." One of my mother's friends said that, putting her hand on my father's shoulder as he sat, hardly recognizable, in his chair. I thought about my mother in the cemetery and wondered if she would wake up and try to get out of her coffin and not be able to. But children have to go to school no matter what happens at home. I learned that the square root of sixty-four is eight, and that π is 3.14159, approximately, and represents the ratio of the circumference to the diameter of a circle.

YEARS passed without my thinking about Hattie Dyer at all, and then suddenly there I was backing away from her in confusion. When I told my wife about it she said, "It wasn't Hattie you embraced but the idea of her." Which was clearly true but didn't explain Hattie's behavior.

Because my mother was fond of her it doesn't necessarily follow that Hattie was fond of my mother. My mother may have been only the white woman she worked for. But if this were true I think I would have sensed it as a child. Perhaps—it was so long ago—she neither remembered nor cared what my mother was like by the time I put my arms around her in my aunt's kitchen.

If I had had the courage to stand my ground and say to her "Why do you refuse to admit that you knew me when I was a little boy?" I don't think she would have given me any answer. However, people do communicate their feelings helplessly. Jealousy can be felt even in the dark. Lovers charge the surrounding air with their delirium. What I felt as I backed away from that unresponsive figure was anger.

MY Aunt Edith was married to a doctor and lived in Bloomington. They had no children and she wanted to take the baby when my mother died, but my father clung to the belief that my mother would have wanted him to keep the family together and not let my brothers and me grow up in separate households, no matter how loving. We were too young to shift for ourselves while he was away, and what he needed was a woman who knew how to run a house and take care of a baby. Hattie could have managed it with one hand tied behind her. So could Annette's Lula. And they would have brought life into the house with them. I cannot believe that there were no more colored women like them in Lincoln. But my father thought (and so did everybody else) that he had to have a white woman. The first housekeeper was hired because she had been a nurse. She had nothing whatever to say, not even about the weather. She had never been around children before, and I felt no inclination to lean against her.

My older brother and I struggled against the iron fact that my mother wasn't there anymore. Or ever going to be. Tears did not help. The house was like a person in a state of coma. If Annette had not turned up sometime during every day I think we would all have stopped breathing. Any domestic crisis that arose remained undealt with until my father came home. He never knew when he left the house on Tuesday morning what brand-new trouble he would find when he returned on Friday afternoon. My mother's clothes closet was empty. Her silver-backed comb and brush and hand mirror were still on her dressing table, but without the slight disorder of hairpins, powder, powder puff, cologne, smelling salts, and so on they were reduced to being merely objects. How endless the nights must have been for him, in the double bed where, when he put out his hand, it encountered only the cold sheets.

The first housekeeper lasted three months. The second took offense no matter which way the wind blew, and it would have been better to have had no one. She made mischief between the two sides of the family and was dismissed when she developed erysipelas. The farm girl passed her examination and gave notice. And so it went. Each time my father's arrangements collapsed he turned in desperation to old Mrs. Dyer, and though she was crippled with rheumatism she came and fed us until he found someone to take over from her.

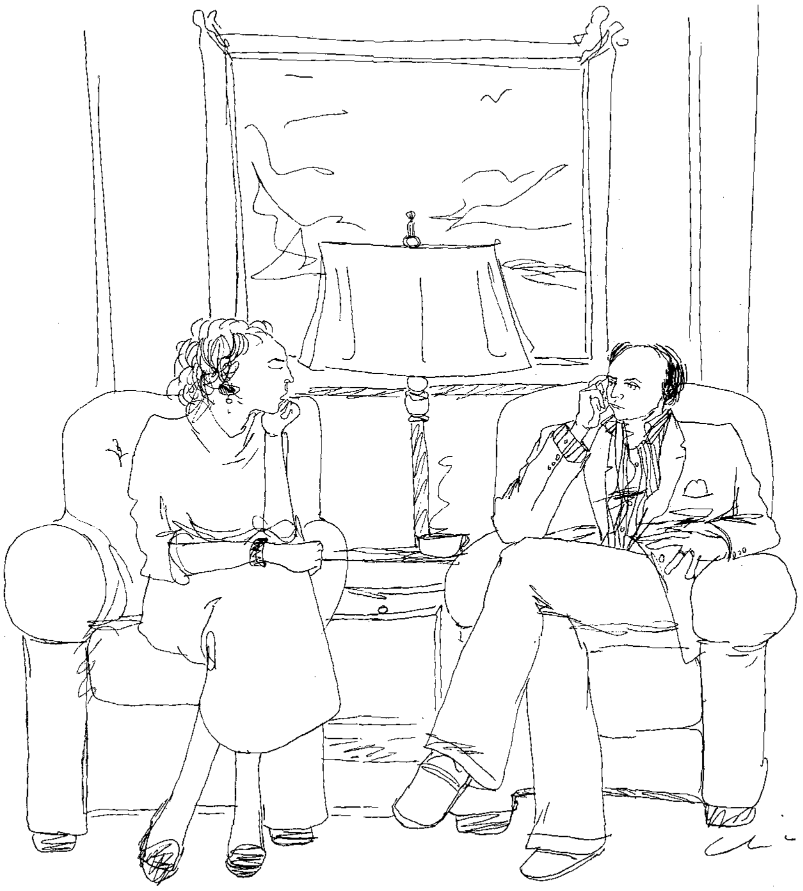
During this period he made an appointment with the local photographer. The result is a very strange picture. My father sits holding the baby on his lap. The baby looks uncomfortable but not about to cry. My father is wearing a starched collar and a dark-blue suit, and looks like what he was, a sad self-made man. My older brother has a fierce expression on his face, as if he means to stare the camera out of countenance. I am standing beside him, a thin little boy of ten, in a Norfolk jacket, knee pants, and long black stockings. The photographer was a man with a good deal of manner, and as he ducked his head under the black cloth and then out again to rearrange the details of our bodies I was threatened with an attack of the giggles, which would not have been appropriate, because my father meant the picture to be a memorial of our bereavement.

Annette and her husband were in the habit of spending the winter in Florida. The first Christmas after my mother died she sent him and my cousin Peg down South without her so she could be with us. Shortly after that I became aware of conversations behind closed doors and then somebody forgot to close the door. Out of fury because she had been dismissed, the second housekeeper had written several unsigned poison-pen letters to my Grandmother Maxwell, in which she said that my father was carrying on with my Aunt Annette. My Uncle Will received similar letters. His response was to put a stop to Annette's coming to our house at all.

My brother felt that it would be disloyal to my father if he set foot in my uncle's house. Nothing on earth (and certainly not the awkwardness) could have kept me from being where Annette was. What I didn't tell her about my feelings she seemed to know anyway. She told Lula to put an extra place at the table for me, and made me feel loved. She also got me to accept (as far as I was able at that age to do this) the succession of changes that came about, a year later, when my father's grief wore itself out and he put his life with my mother behind him. Children, with no conception of how life goes on and on, expect a faithfulness that comes at too high a price. Now that I am old enough to be his father, in a manner of speaking, I have no trouble saying yes, of course he should have remarried. He had always liked women, and without feminine companionship, without someone sitting at the opposite end of the table whom he could feel tenderly about, he would have turned sour and become a different man. He began to accept invitations, and the matchmakers put their heads together.

There used to be, and probably still is somewhere, a group picture of the guests at my father's wedding, which took place in the house of my stepmother's sister, in 1921. The photographer set up his tripod and camera on the lawn in front of the house, and as the guests assembled in front of him there was a good deal of joking and laughter. I had already passed over the line into puberty but not yet reached the stage of hypercritical judgments when I would find the loud laughter of grown people enjoying themselves unbearable.

DURING the years that my father lived in Chicago his heavy leather grip, that my mother had hated the sight of, remained on a closet shelf unless we took the train down to Lincoln. There were several people he felt obliged to call on whenever he went home, and one of them was Mrs. Dyer, who still lived in the little house at the foot of Ninth Street hill. He expected his sons to go with him. The visits went on as long as she lived. Mr. Dyer was never there, and I think must have died. I was not expected to take part in the conversation; only to be there. And so my eyes were free to roam around the front room we sat in. The iron potbellied stove, the threadbare carpet, the darkened wallpaper. The calendar, courtesy of the local lumber company. The hard wooden chairs we sat on. Mrs. Dyer and my father talked about her health, about changes in Lincoln, about how fast time goes. And then he made some excuse that got us on our feet. As we were saying goodbye he took out his billfold and extracted a new ten-dollar bill. But not one word did either of them say about the thing that had brought



"*Even just sitting here, I'm receiving a tremendous amount of information from you.*"

him there, which was that in the time of his greatest trouble, when there was no one else he could have turned to, she didn't fail him.

GOSSIP OF THE STARS
WASN'T THAT A CUTE NEW MOON THAT WE SAW WITH JUPITER? AND COULD THERE BE ANOTHER RING AHEAD FOR SATURN?
John O'Brien

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IN a box of old papers, not long ago, I found an eighty-page history of the town of Lincoln, published by Feldman's Print Shop in 1953, when Lincoln was celebrating the hundredth anniversary of its founding. Thumbing through it I came upon a picture of Mrs. Dyer, looking just the way I remembered her. She was beautiful as an old woman, and probably always. In the photograph she is wearing a black silk dress with a lace collar. Her mouth is sunken in with age, but her eyes are as bright as a child's, and from her smile you'd think it had been a privilege to stand over a tub of soapy water doing other people's washing year in and year out. Surrounding the picture there is an interview with Hattie, who had been chosen as "a respected citizen of the community" to give "something of the history of one of our distinguished colored families." The interview is only five hundred words long, and I assume that much of what she said never got into print. For example, what about her brother, Dr. William Dyer? Was the interviewer unaware that he had succeeded in becoming a doctor when this was exceedingly rare for a Negro and that he was on the surgical staffs of the best hospitals in Kansas City? Or that he was also among those citizens of Lincoln who were especially honored at the centennial celebration? Perhaps the history went to press before this fact was known. In any case, while Dr. Dyer was in town for the honoring he stayed with his sister. He had managed to put himself in a position where no white man could summon him with the word "Boy!" She must have been immensely proud of him. The interview does quote Hattie as saying that in Alfred Dyer's house "there were no intoxicants allowed, no dancing, no card playing, but how we loved to dance! And we did dance when they were away from home." As long as her father was able to work, Hattie said, he was employed by the B. P. Andrews Lumber Company in town. I suspect he had many jobs, some of them overlapping. It is hard to believe how little people were paid for their labor in those days, but the Dyers managed. They didn't have to walk along the railroad right-of-way picking up pieces of coal. In the interview, Hattie said she was a year old when she was brought to the house on Elm Street.

When her mother first came to Lincoln from Missouri, she worked in a boarding house run by a Mrs. Jones, Hattie said. It was on the site of the high school—which, in the twenties, when I went there, was an old building with deep grooves in the stairs, worn by generations of adolescent feet. Mrs. Jones's establishment had a big oak dining-room table with all the leaves in it, and barely enough room for the thin young colored woman to squeeze between the chair backs and the sideboard. No sooner were the dishes from the midday meal washed and put back on the table and the pots and pans drying upside down in a pyramid on the kitchen range than it was time to start peeling potatoes for supper. Jesus loved her and that got her back on her feet when she was too tired to move. And before long, Alfred Dyer was waiting at the kitchen door to take her to prayer meeting.

"In looking back over the years," Hattie said to the interviewer, "I am proud of my father and mother, who were highly regarded by all who knew them, white as well as black. Their deep religious faith has been my help and strength throughout my life."

During one of those times when my father was searching for a housekeeper and Mrs. Dyer was in our kitchen, she stopped me as we got up from the table at the end of dinner and asked if I'd like to go to church with her to hear a choir from the South. It was a very cold night and there was a white full moon, and walking along beside Mrs. Dyer I saw the shadows of the bare branches, laid out on the snow. Our footsteps made a squeaking sound and it hurt to breathe. The church was way downtown on the other side of the courthouse square. As we made our way indoors I saw that it was crammed with people. It was also overheated. And I was conscious of the fact that I was the only white person there. Nobody made anything of it. The men and women in the choir were of all ages, and dressed in white. For the first time in my life I heard "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," and "Pharoah's Army Got Drownded," and "Were You There?" and "Joshua Fit de Battle of Jericho." Singing "Don't let nobody turn you 'round," the choir turned one another around and stamped their feet (in church!). I looked at Mrs. Dyer out of the corner of my eye. She was smiling. "Not my brother, not my sister, but it's me, *Oh Lord!*" the white-robed singers shouted. The people around me sat listening politely, with their hands folded in their laps, and I thought, perhaps mistakenly, that they too were hearing these spirituals for the first time.

I COULD have asked my aunt about Hattie and she would have told me all that a white person would be likely to know, but I didn't. I had other things on my mind. More years passed. I found that I had a nagging curiosity about Hattie—about what her life had been like. Finally it occurred to me that my cousin Tom Perry, who lives in Lincoln, might be able to learn about her. He wrote back that I had waited too long. Among white people there was nobody left who knew her, and he couldn't get much information from the black people he talked to. He did find out that when she moved back to Lincoln she lived in the little house on Elm Street. Tom had been in high school with her son, who was an athlete, a track star. He became an undertaker and died in middle age, of cancer of the throat. Hattie spent the last years of her life in Springfield with one of her daughters. Her son was born after Hattie came back to Lincoln to live, and his last name was Brummel, so whatever the trouble with her husband was, they stayed together.

In his letter my cousin said that at the time of his death Alfred Dyer owned his own house and the houses on either side of it. This surprised me. He did not look like a property owner. All three houses were torn down recently, Tom said, and the site had not been built on.

## STAGES ON LIFE'S WAY

### 1. THE NIGHT BEFORE

He liked waiting. Waiting gave him a purpose to live.
Waiting outside the marriage counsellor's office,
He read that the unconscious is structured like a language.
The verbs in the dream he had the night before were

Copulating on flying carpets or chasing taxis in Tokyo,
Always doing something, taking action, not just waiting
As he was doing now, waiting quietly in an armchair holding a book,
Or pacing back and forth like an expectant husband,

Waiting for the appointment with the insignificant clerk
Without whose signature the elopement would be cancelled,
Waiting without anxiety, knowing that the time of the wait

Would be infinite and how much clear thinking could be done,
Waiting for the dinner bell, for the music to begin,
Waiting for the fog to lift, so the darkness could be seen.

### 2. THE MORNING AFTER

"You're a bastard," she said,
Admiringly. He was; he admitted it. He saved his own book
From the flames, letting hers burn. How young he looked!
She spat: "I'd rather be dead."

The ritual began with a kiss, as it always did.
The one-armed man identified himself. "My name," he flashed

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I HAVE not been inside our house on Ninth Street since I was twelve years old. It was built in the eighteen-eighties, possibly even earlier. The last time I drove past it, five years ago, I saw that the present owners had put shutters on the front windows. Nothing looks right to me that is not the way I remember it, but it is the work of a moment, of less time than that, to do away with the shutters and bring back into existence the lavender-blue clematis on the side porch and the trellis that supported it, the big tree in the side yard that was killed by the elm blight, the house next door that burned down one night twenty-five or thirty years ago.

Though I know better, I half believe that if the front door of our house were opened to me I would find the umbrella stand by the window in the front hall and the living-room carpet would be moss green. Sometimes I put myself to sleep by going from room to room of that house, taking note of my father's upright piano with the little hand-wound Victrola on it, Guido Reni's "Aurora" over the living-room mantelpiece, the Victorian sofas and chairs. I make my way up the front stairs by the light of the gas night-light in the upstairs hall, and count the four bedroom doors. Or I go through the dining room into the pantry, where, as the door swings shut behind me and before I can push open the door to the brightly lit kitchen, I experience once more the full terror of the dark. Beyond the kitchen is the laundry, where the big iron cookstove is. Opening off this room are two smaller rooms, hardly bigger than closets. One contains jars of preserved fruit and vegetables and a grocery carton full of letters to my mother from my father. The other room is dark and has a musty odor. The dog sleeps here, on a square of old dirty carpet, and there is a toilet of an antiquated kind. Hattie is expected to use this toilet and not the one in the upstairs bathroom that we use. You could argue, I suppose, that some such arrangement would have been found in other old houses in Lincoln, and because it was usual it may not have given offense—a proposition I do not find very convincing.

My mother was thirty-seven when she died. When I try to recall what she was like I remember what a child would remember. How she bent over the bed and kissed me good night and drew the covers around my chin. How she made me hold still while she cut my bangs. If I try to see her as one adult looking at another, I realize how much there is that I don't know. One day I heard her exclaim into the telephone "It won't do!" and wondering what wouldn't do I listened. After a

His teeth, "is death." And the fruit in her mouth turned to ash
In the darkened hotel room, under the coverlet.

A ringing phone interrupted their embrace.
She put a hand to her face.
Where had he seen her before? In somebody else's window.

The woman in the painting was somebody else's widow,
Somebody else's wife.
But that was art, and this was life.

### 3. THE NEXT DAY

He was impulsive. One day he decided to read Conrad
And bought "The Secret Agent," "Victory," and "Under Western Eyes."
The next day he had a craving for canned fruits
And came home with purple plums in heavy syrup, Queen Anne cherries

In light syrup, and pineapple chunks in juice, no sugar added.
Also, he wasn't going to the theatre enough, so he lined up seats
For "Gypsy" and "City of Angels." Then he forgot to go, and left
The cans of fruit in the icebox, and put Conrad on the shelf.

The next disaster hadn't yet begun. So there was time
To find out what she was like as a child, and they could be
Children together in her parents' hotel room, opening the drawers,

Hiding in the closet, and she put on her mother's pearl necklace,
And later they looked for snakes behind the bushes, and she fell down.
It was summer: a bowl of ripe apricots, the mud on their knees.

—DAVID LEHMAN

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minute or two it became clear that a colored family was on the point of buying a house on the other side of the street from ours, and that my mother was talking to somebody at the bank. This in itself was odd. If my father had been home she would have got him to do it. She must have believed that the matter wouldn't wait until he got home. "It won't do!" she kept repeating into the telephone. "It just won't do." A few weeks later, when a moving van drew up before the house in question, it was to unload the furniture of a white family.

One of the things I didn't understand when I was a child was the fact that grown people—not my father and mother but people who came to our house or that they stopped to talk to on the street—seemed to think they were excused from taking the feelings of colored people into consideration. When they said something derogatory about Negroes, they didn't bother to lower their voices even though fully aware that there was a colored person within hearing distance. Quite apart from what Hattie may have overheard in Lincoln, what she saw and lived through in Chicago, including race riots, might easily have been enough to make her fear and hate all white men without exception. And so in that case it was the color of my skin—the color of my skin and the physical contact—that accounted for what happened in my Aunt Annette's kitchen. Having arrived at this conclusion I found that I didn't entirely believe it, because at the time I had the feeling that Hattie's anger was not a generalized anger; it had something to do with who I was. Did somebody in our family do something unforgivable to her? My Grandmother Blinn? Not likely. My father always leaned over backward to be fair and just toward anybody who worked for him. Though I cannot bring back the words, I can hear, in a kind of replay, the sound of my mother and Hattie talking. We are in the throes of spring housecleaning. Her black hair bound up in a dish towel, my mother stands in the double doorway between the front hall and the living room and directs Hattie's attention to a corner of the ceiling where a spider has taken refuge. With a dust mop on the end of a very long pole, Hattie dislodges it. There is no sullenness in Hattie's voice and no strain in my mother's. They are simply easy with one another.

In the end I decided that I must be barking up the wrong tree, and that what happened in my aunt's kitchen was simply the collision of two experiences. And I stopped thinking about it until I had a second letter from my cousin. "I don't understand it," he wrote. "The colored people in Lincoln have always been very open. If you asked one of them a question you got the answer. This is different. They don't seem to want to talk about Hattie Dyer." In a P.S. he added that the elderly black man who took care of his yard was reading one of my books. Miss Lucy Jane Purrington, whose yard he also looked after, had lent it to him. And in a flash I realized what the unforgivable thing was and who had done it.

FROM time to time I have published fiction that had as a background a small town very much like Lincoln, or even Lincoln itself. The fact that I had not lived there since I was fourteen years old sealed off my memories of it, and made of it a world I knew no longer existed, that seemed always available for storytelling. Once, I began to write a novel without knowing what was going to happen in it. As the details unfolded before my mind, I went on putting them down, trusting that there was a story and that I would eventually find it. The novel began with an evening party in the year 1912. I didn't bother to make up the house where the party took place because there at hand was our house on Ninth Street and it gave me pleasure to write about it. The two main characters were an overly conscientious young lawyer named Austin King and his wife, Martha, who was pregnant. He had not been able to bring himself to say no to a letter from Mississippi relatives proposing a visit. At the beginning of the novel the relatives have arrived, the party is about to begin, and Martha King is not making things any easier for her husband by lying face down across their bed and refusing to speak to him.

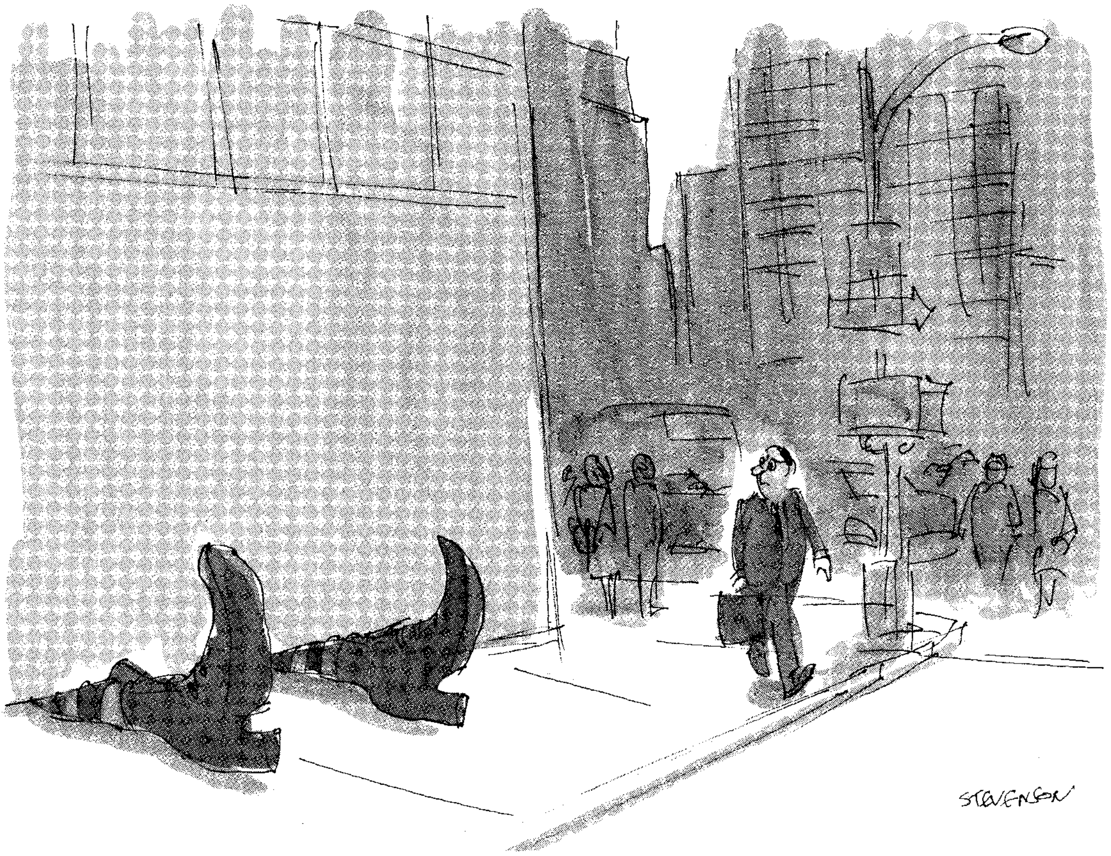
Characters in fiction are seldom made out of whole cloth. A little of this person and something of that one and whatever else the novelist's imagination suggests is how they come into being. The novelist hopes that by avoiding actual appearances and actual names (which are so much more convincing than the names he invents for them), by making tall people short and red-headed people blond, that sort of thing, the sources of the composite character will not be apparent.

We did in fact have a visit of some duration from my Grandmother Maxwell's younger sister, who lived in Greenville, Mississippi, and her husband, their two grown sons, married daughter, son-in-law, and grandchild, a little girl of four. Remembering how their Southern sociability transformed our house, I tried to bring into existence a family with the same ability to charm, but whose ambiguous or destructive natures were partly imagined and partly derived from people not even born at the time of this visit. The little girl crossed over and became the daughter of Austin and Martha King. The young woman of the invented family was unmarried, and an early feminist, and without meaning to she whittled away at the marriage of her Northern cousin, whom she had fallen in love with. Though I did my best to change my Mississippi relatives beyond recognition, many years later my father told me that a piece of questionable behavior on the part of one of the characters in the novel was very close to something that actually happened. But it was wholly by accident. If you turn the imagination loose like a hunting dog, it will often return with the bird in its mouth.

About fifty pages into the writing of the novel I had a dream that revealed to me the direction the story was trying to take and who the characters were stand-ins for. In real life, my father was musical, and could play by ear almost any instrument he picked up, and once had the idea of putting on a musical comedy with local talent. The rehearsals took place in our living room. He sat at the piano and played the vocal score for the singers. My mother sat on the davenport listening and I sat beside her. Things did not go well. The cast was erratic about coming to rehearsals, the tenor flagrantly so. One rainy evening only one member of the cast showed up, the pretty young woman who had the soprano lead. She and my father agreed that there was not much point in going on with it. Two and a half years after my mother's death she became my stepmother. It is not the sort of thing that is subject to proof, but I nevertheless believe, on the strength of the dream and of the novel I had blindly embarked on, that I caught something out of the air—a whiff of physical attraction between the young woman and my father. And since it was more than I could deal with I managed not to think about it for the next twenty-seven years.

Austin King's house was clearly our house, to anyone who had ever been in it. In 1912 Hattie was across the street at my Grandmother Blinn's. But during the visit of my Great-Aunt Ina and her family Hattie was working in our kitchen. However, I never had it in mind to write about her. Rachel, the colored woman who worked in the Kings' kitchen, was imaginary. Insofar as she was modelled on anyone, it was the West Indian maid of a family in New York I came to know years later. They lived in a big old-fashioned sunless but cheerful apartment off upper Madison Avenue. The front door was never locked, and I used to open it often when I was a solitary young man. I forget whether Renée came from Haiti or Guadeloupe. About her private life I knew nothing whatever and I don't think the family she worked for did, either.

In a run-down part of Lincoln I once saw a railroad caboose that had come to rest on concrete blocks, in a yard littered with cast-off objects that were picturesque but of no value: a funeral basket, a slab of marble, a broken-down glider, etc. Rachel had to live somewhere, and why not here? Her five children were not all by the same father but they were all equally beautiful to her. She was easygoing, and perfectly able to be a member of the family one minute and a servant the next, but nobody owned her or ever would. None of this corresponds in any way with the little I know about Hattie Dyer's life and character, but I am afraid that is beside the point.

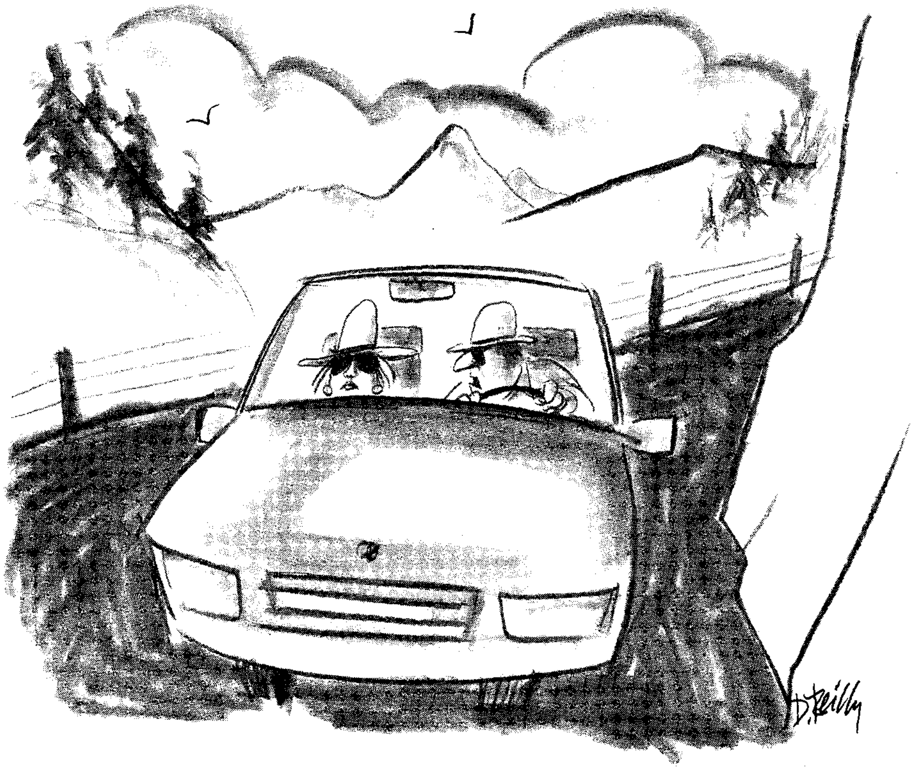


In an earlier, quasi-autobiographical novel, thinking that my father and stepmother would probably not be comfortable reading about themselves, I made the protagonist's father a race-track tout living far out on the rim of things, and an elderly friend of the family said disapprovingly, "Why did you make your father like that?" So perhaps there is no way to avoid or forestall identifications by a reader bent on making them.

When I was working on the novel about the Kings, it did not occur to me that Hattie would read it or even know it existed. A few women who had known me as a child would put their names on the waiting list at the Lincoln Public Library; one or two at the most might buy it, is what I thought. Men didn't read books. The Chicago *Tribune* and the *Evening Courier* supplied them with all the reading matter they required.

Early on in the writing of the novel the characters took over, and had so much to say to one another that mostly what I did was record their conversation. The difference between this and hallucination is not all that much. One day a new character appeared and inserted himself retroactively into the novel: He came on a slow freight train from Indianapolis. "Riding in the same boxcar with him, since noon, were an old man and a fifteen-year-old boy and neither of them ever wanted to see him again. His eyes were bloodshot, his face and hands were gritty, his hair was matted with cinders. His huge, pink-palmed hands hung down out of the sleeves of a corduroy mackinaw that was too small for him and filthy and torn. He had thrown away his only pair of socks two days before. There was a hole in the sole of his right shoe, his belly was empty, and the police were on the lookout for him in St. Louis and Cincinnati."

On the night of the party, while Rachel was still at the Kings', he appeared at her house and frightened the children, one of whom was his. Rachel was not totally surprised when she walked in on him. She had dreamt about him two nights before. When she realized he was not just after money but meant to settle down with them she took her children and fled. I was frightened of him, too, even as he took life on the page. For a week he stayed blind drunk, and as I described how he lay half undressed on a dirty unmade bed, barely able to lift the bottle to his mouth, I thought, *Why not?* and let the fire in the stove go out, and the outside door blew open, and in a little while he died of the cold he had stopped feeling.



*"Because my genetic programming prevents me from stopping to ask directions—that's why!"*

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I have no reason to think that Hattie's husband, Fred Brummel, was anything but a decent man. My mother's statement that Hattie was having trouble with him possibly amounted to no more than that they were of two minds about moving to Chicago. If Hattie did indeed read my book then what could she think but that I had portrayed her as a loose woman and her husband as a monster of evil? And people in Lincoln, colored people and white, would wonder if I knew things about Fred Brummel that they didn't, and if he was not the person they took him for. I had exposed their married life and blackened his character in order to make a fortune from my writing. I was a thousand miles away, where she couldn't confront me with what I had done. And if she accused me to other people it would only call attention to the book and make more people read it than had already. If all this is true (and my bones tell me that it *is* true) then why, when I walked into my aunt's kitchen, should she be pleased to see me?

I do not feel that it is a light matter.

Any regret for what I may have made Hattie feel is nowhere near enough to have appeased her anger. She was perfectly right not to look at me, not to respond at all, when I put my arms around her. I must have seen Fred Brummel at one time or another or else why does his name conjure up a slight, handsome man whose skin was lighter than Hattie's? If, now, I were to go out to the cemetery and find his grave (which would take some doing) and sit beside it patiently for a good long time, would I learn anything more than that dust does not speak, to anyone, let alone to a stranger? He was once alive. He married Hattie and they had several children. That much is a fact. It does not seem too much to assume that he was happy on the day she told him she would marry him. And again when he held his first child in his arms. And that he was proud of Hattie, as proud as my father was of my mother. Who are now dust also.

—William Maxwell

# A REPORTER AT LARGE

## INSIDE/OUTSIDE

ON a perfect summer day last year in Montreal, local raspberries in season, two tickets to that night's ballgame riding in my breast pocket, I went to meet some friends at a downtown bar I favored at the time: Woody's Pub, on Bishop Street. As I arrived, a solemn middle-aged man was taking photographs of the blackboard mounted on the outside steps. He was intent on a notice scrawled in chalk on the board:

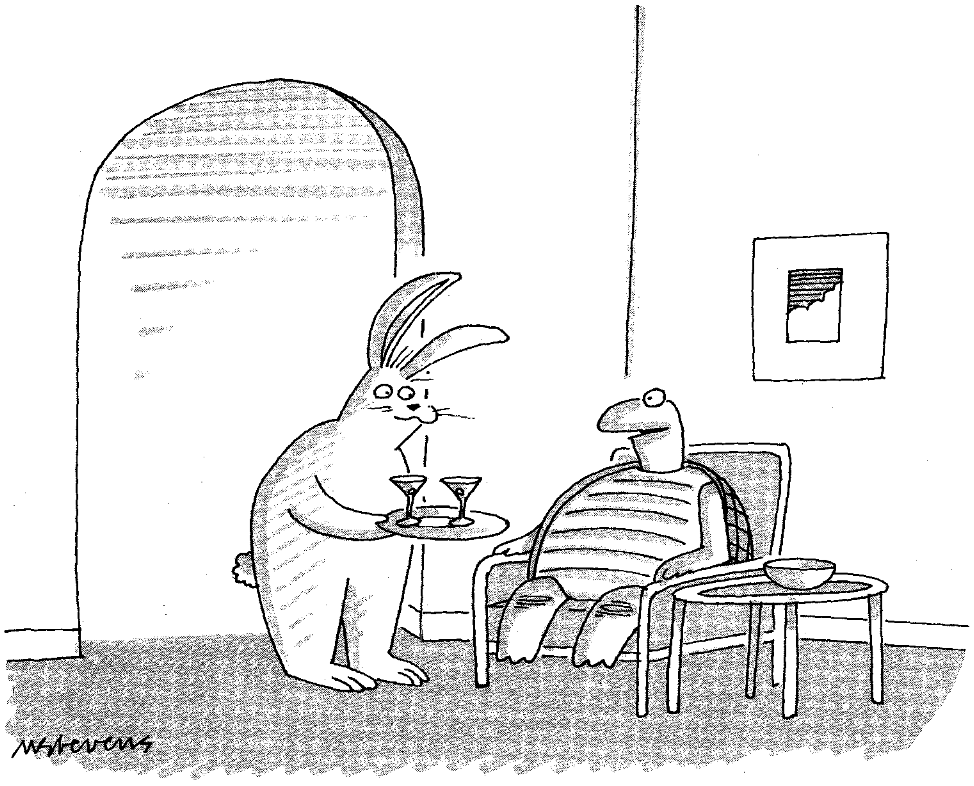
Today's Special
Ploughman's Lunch

The notice happened to be a blatant violation of Quebec's Bill 178, which prohibits exterior signs in any language but French, and the photographer was one of a number of self-appointed vigilantes who, on lazy summer days off work, do not head for the countryside to cool off in the woods or to fish: instead, they dutifully search the downtown streets for English-language or bilingual commercial signs that are an affront to Montreal's *visage linguistique*—"Hiya! Vermont Baseball Fans Welcome Here," say, or "Happy Hour 5 to 7." They photograph the evidence and then lodge an official complaint with the Commission de Protection de la Langue Française. Woody was lucky. A chalkboard sign could be erased. However, had he chosen to promote his lunches with an outside neon sign in English only, or even a bilingual one, that would have been something else again. A first offense would get him off with no worse than a warning from one of the commission's inspectors. All the same, a dossier would be opened on him. There would be another visit to his bar and, if he persisted in his obloquy, a letter from a bailiff with a thirty-day warning, and then a period of grace that could last for as long as nine months before he could be scheduled to appear in court, where he could be fined a maximum of five hundred and seventy dollars. Woody could easily spin out the process for a couple of years, maybe longer, behave himself for a month, post another English-only or bilingual sign, and start the ball rolling again. The truth is that we have always done things differently in Quebec, our laws seldom being quite what they appear to be. During the nineteen-forties, for example, gambling casinos and bordellos were both illegal, but in fact Montreal was a wide-open city. Before making a raid in those days, our cops, a considerate bunch, unfailingly phoned the proprietor to settle on an appropriate number of sinners to be booked and, on leaving, solemnly padlocked a toilet rather than the front door, minimizing inconvenience to the clientele once play had resumed. Honoring this tradition, the sign law, ostensibly uncompromising, in practice does not so much prohibit exterior commercial signs in all languages but French as slap a surcharge on them.

In 1990, four provincial agencies, with an annual budget of twenty-four million dollars, were in place to deal with our linguistic conundrums: the Commission de Toponymie (its function to rename towns, rivers, and mountains that have Anglophone place-names), the Office de la Langue Française, the Conseil de la Langue Française, and the Commission de Protection, the inspectors for the last dubbed "the tongue-troopers" by ungrateful English-speaking Montrealers.

According to the 1986 census, Montreal has a population of 2,921,357, which breaks down as follows: 1,974,115 whose mother tongue is French; 433,095 whose mother tongue is English; and 514,147 whose mother tongue is Italian, Greek, Portuguese, or other. In the new, nationalist nomenclature, the population is classified as Francophone (a.k.a. the collectivity), Anglophone, or, in the case of persons whose mother tongue is neither French nor English, allophone.

At Woody's Pub, where a number of us used to gather late in the afternoon to review the day's idiocies, the banter slipping from English into French and back again, we did not suffer from a lack of sustenance in the spring and summer of 1990. The snows had hardly melted when the zealots who ran Montreal's French-speaking Catholic school board shocked even the separatist Parti Québécois with a demand that immigrant students who were caught shooting the breeze in English in the schoolyards be severely



*"No, thanks. I'm in training."*

*"She married the world's best tennis player, and they lived happily ever after."*

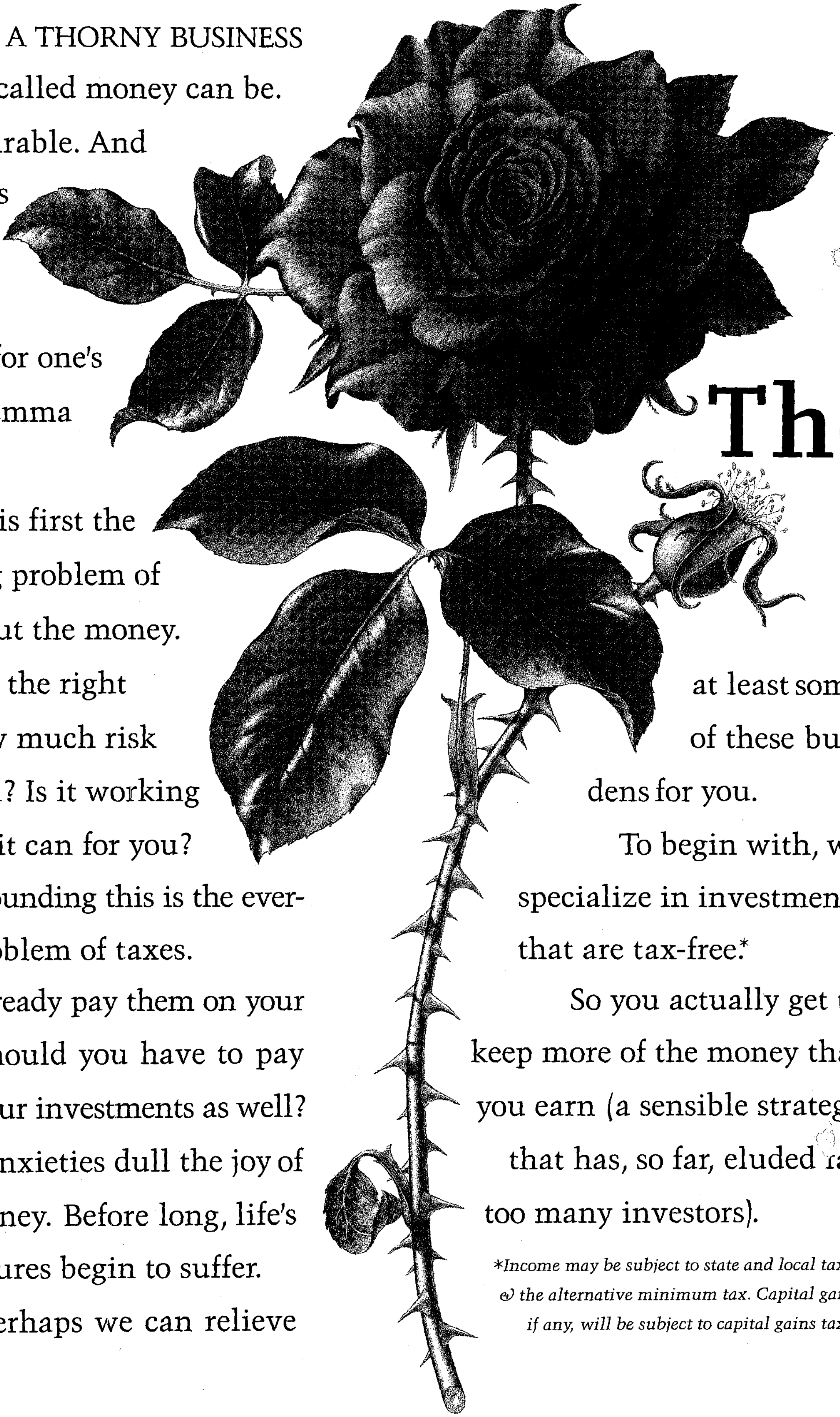
punished. Then, aging nutters out in small-town Ontario trampled on a Quebec flag, wiping their shoes on the fleur-de-lis for the benefit of TV cameras. Next to be heard from was the Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada, or APEC, an organization whose president, a seventy-one-year-old retired lawyer named Ron Leitch, claimed that it had thirty-six thousand members. In a 1990 appearance before a parliamentary committee on the Official Languages Act of 1969, which recognizes both English and French as Canada's official languages, Leitch had also claimed that the legislation, introduced by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau's government, was an intrusive piece of social engineering that discriminated against long-serving Anglophone civil servants, denying them promotion if they were unilingual. If official bilingualism, imposed by Ottawa, was allowed to continue, he argued on another occasion, Canada as a nation would be destroyed. He was, he insisted, not a bigot. However, he couldn't deny that his organization, founded in 1977, had been inspired by his reading of "Bilingual Today, French Tomorrow," by one J. V. Andrew, Lieutenant Commander R.C.N. (retired), who had not long before told an APEC meeting that English Canada needed the French language as much as anyone needs the AIDS virus.

Responding to the insult to their flag, Québécois rowdies in Montreal booed the national anthem at ballgames, obviously unaware that "O Canada" had been composed by one of their own, Calixa Lavallée, on his return to Montreal after serving with the 4th Rhode Island Regiment in the American Civil War. Furthermore it was the Saint-Jean Baptiste Society, rabidly nationalist today, that commissioned Lavallée to set Adolphe Basile Routhier's poem "O Canada! Terre de Nos Aïeux" to music.

In the summer of 1990, it should also be noted, CBC-TV's annual soporific, the Canada Day special, as inexorably mawkish as ever, found a sponsor for its commercial breaks sufficiently patriotic not to worry about the ratings: Toshiba of Canada. And Bryn Smith, a journeyman pitcher who had jumped the Expos to sign with the Cards, found Montreal, its many fine restaurants notwithstanding, a hardship: his wife was obliged to shop across the border in Plattsburgh, New York, a forty-seven-mile drive, in order to keep his family supplied with Doritos. Then vandals took to the streets, spray-painting over the inflammatory word "STOP" on road signs to transform it into "101," as in Bill 101, the French Language Charter. True, nitpickers could argue that "stop" was correct French and was also the internationally recognized designation in France and other French-speaking countries. Never mind. Québécois purists insisted that street corners must be cleansed of that lingering reminder of the 1759 British conquest the "STOP/ARRÊT" sign. The Parti Québécois government ordained in 1982 that six years down the road only one word, "ARRÊT," would be legal on the signs, even though replacing eleven thousand signs would set the city of Montreal back six hundred thousand dollars. In 1989, the Liberal government extended the deadline to January 1, 1993.

That autumn, the federal government contributed to the country's linguistic squabbles, creating a candy crisis. A food inspector with the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs ruled that jelly babies and fruit pastilles manufactured by Rowntree P.L.C., of Britain, had to be removed from the shelves of a British specialty shop in Toronto—the Leicester Square WC 2 store—because their names and ingredients were not printed in both official languages. Other provocative British imports pronounced guilty of the same offense included Cadbury's Dairy Milk and Fruit & Nut, Nestlé's Milky Bar, and Fry's Peppermint Cream.

FROM the very beginning, Canada's development as a nation, rather than a grudging coalition of constantly bickering provinces, has been retarded by two seemingly insoluble problems: the language issue and loyalties that burn brightest regionally. In 1839, Lord Durham, High Commissioner of British North America, published a famous report in London that recommended the shotgun marriage of Upper and Lower Canada—of Ontario and Quebec—and led to the passage of the Act of Union by the British Parliament the following year. Canada, he ventured, actually comprised two nations warring within the bosom of a single state, and the only thing for it was to anglicize the French. "There can hardly



# The

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be conceived a nationality more destitute of all that can invigorate and elevate a people, than that which is exhibited by the descendants of the French in Lower Canada, owing to their retaining their peculiar language and manners,” he wrote. “They are a people with no history and no literature.”

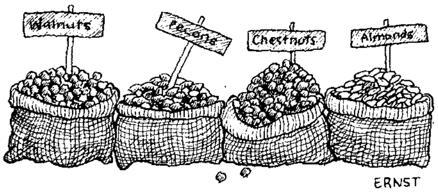
In fact they were among the first Europeans to settle on this continent, charting its rivers and probing its hinterland, and the names of their explorers still resonate: Cartier, Champlain, La Salle, Marquette, Jolliet, La Vérendrye. Lysiane Gagnon, a political columnist for Montreal’s *La Presse*, once observed that “years before the English conquered Canada” the French there “had already formed a society with its own institutions and traditions that was quite distinct from France.” That society was at risk only two years after the Act of Union, when, on September 13, 1842, Lower Canada’s Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine rose in the Assembly and dared to speak in French, earning an immediate rebuke from one of the Upper Canada ministers. Lafontaine replied, “I am asked to pronounce in another language than my mother tongue the first speech that I have to make in this House. I distrust my ability to speak English. But I must inform the honorable members that even if my knowledge of English was as intimate as my knowledge of French, I should nevertheless make my first speech in the language of my French-Canadian compatriots, if only to protest against the cruel injustice of the Union Act in trying to proscribe the mother tongue of half the population of Canada. I owe it to my compatriots; I owe it to myself.”

Following Lafontaine’s speech, French was tolerated by the Assembly, but it was not officially sanctioned until 1848. Nineteen years later, on July 1, 1867, the four Canadian provinces in existence at the time (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, and Ontario) were united as the Dominion of Canada, a largely empty space that within three years—once it had been granted title to its northernmost reaches, Prince Rupert’s Land—emerged as the second-largest country in the world. (However, that booster’s statistic, paraded ad nauseam in Canada, is misleading, because in truth the bulk of this undeniably vast domain remains uninhabitable: to this day, most Canadians are snuggled within a hundred miles of the 49th Parallel, intimidated by the punishingly cold tundra to the north and American pizzazz to the south.) The confederation was authorized by the British North America Act, which was passed by Parliament in faraway Westminster. The House of Commons, three-quarters empty at the time, filled up immediately afterward for the debate on a dog-tax bill.

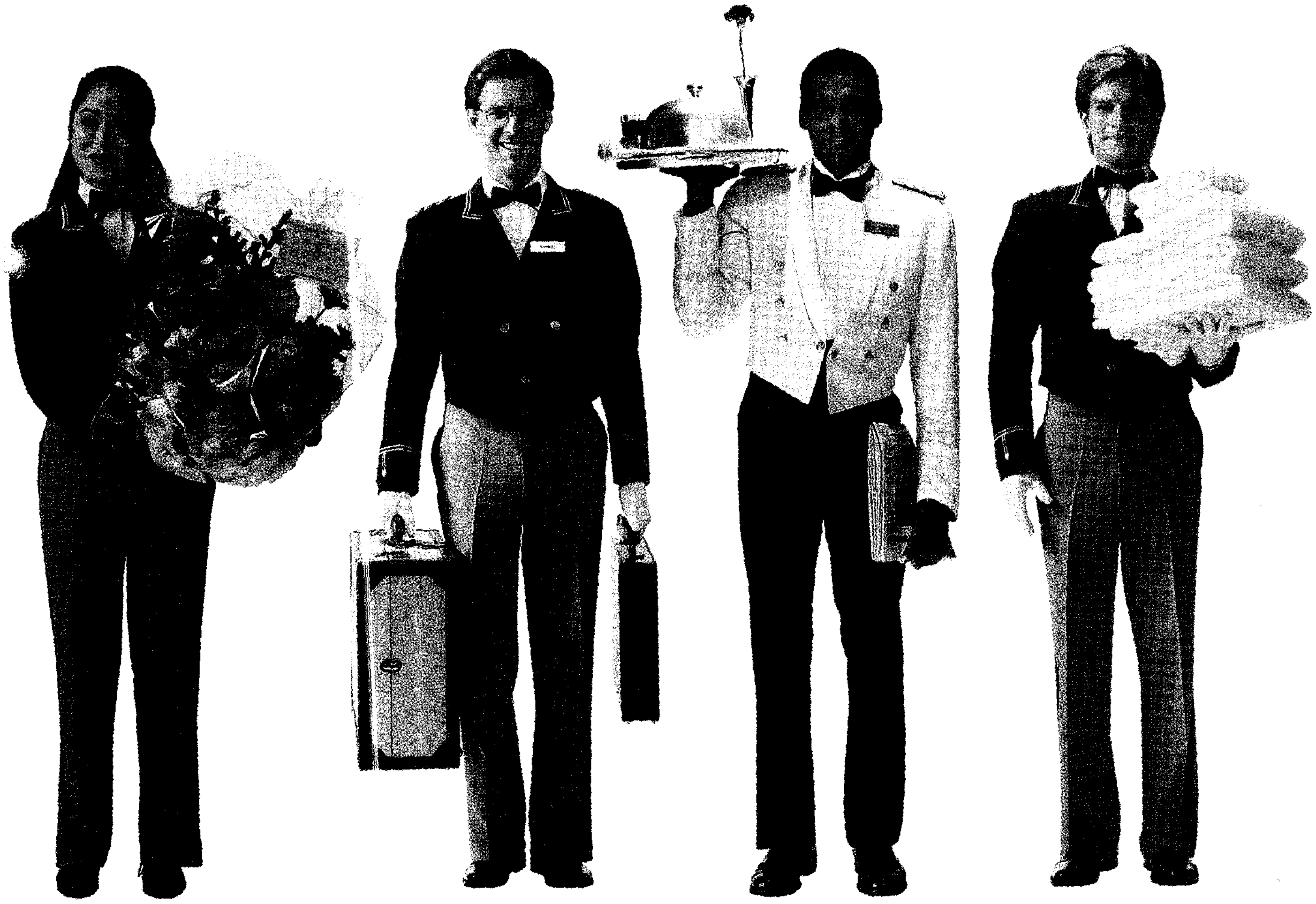
According to Léandre Bergeron, the author of “Petit Manuel d’Histoire du Québec,” a best-seller in the province, the primary aim of confederation was to suppress the French: with a stroke of the pen, they would “be reduced to one-third of the population and could not prevent the masters of the country from governing them as they wish.” Others point out that the act treated Quebec as a special case: it enshrined Quebec’s right to its own civil code and to the use of French in Parliament and in the courts, and recognized English as the province’s other language. It is important to grasp the fact that Canada, ostensibly self-governing under the terms of the act, could not amend its own constitution without the approval of its nanny, the British Parliament.

From 1927 through 1971, there were nine attempts to patriate Canada’s constitution—a process almost invariably stymied by obdurate Quebec governments, which would settle for nothing less than having Quebec’s “special status,” and also a Quebec veto on any future constitutional amendments, woven into the document. These endless negotiations, fascinating to Canadian politicians, were immensely boring as far as most Canadians—English or French—were concerned. All the same, they continued. Then, in 1981, after protracted haggling with ten premiers, most of them provincial in more than status, Prime Minister Trudeau rammed through an amending formula that enabled him to bring a constitution home—a new constitution that has been the source of much acrimony ever since.

The resulting Constitution Act of 1982, signed by every Canadian province except Quebec, which protested that the terms of the act betrayed it, did manage to end the embarrassing power of the British Parliament to legislate for Canada. However, its Charter of Rights and Freedoms guaranteed Canadians no more, come to think of it, than they had always taken for granted: the right to “freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication.” The charter was also undermined by something like a satisfaction-or-your-money-back guarantee: over the objections of Prime Minister Trudeau but at the insistence of the Western premiers, who otherwise would not endorse the document, it included a “notwithstanding” clause. This clause allowed any provincial legislature to override vital sections of the charter it didn’t like, for a period of five years—after which it could renew its use of the clause. There was another kicker. The charter recognized English and French as the official languages of Canada, enjoying equality of status, but Quebec, marching to its own drummer, as usual, had already ruled French the only official language of the province. In an appearance before a joint committee of the House of Commons and the Senate, on August 27, 1987, Trudeau, who had retired three years earlier, commented on this contradiction: “I do not think one has to stretch one’s imagination much to see that [Quebec] officials will be inclined to tell immigrants that they are living in a province where there is only one official language, rather than in a country where there are in fact two; and that the Province of Quebec, which constitutes a distinct society . . . is different. I am not saying they will be taught nonsense, or that this is a sin; I am simply saying that it seems quite clear the notion of provincial patriotism will become stronger. The same will apply to Newfoundland and British Columbia, minus that linguistic difference.”



QUÉBÉCOIS nationalists are convinced that they are a nation, and that the rest of Canada comprises pseudo-American drifters. Even so, the Québécois *pure laine*, not necessarily descended from the original eighty-five hundred French settlers but made of the right stuff all the same, are



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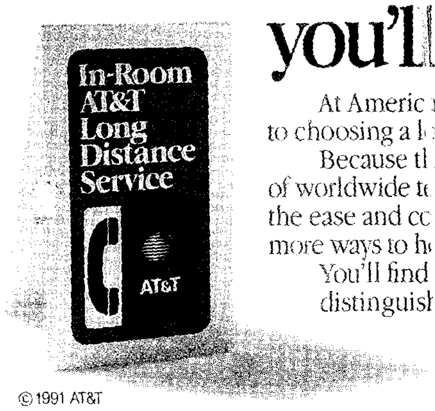

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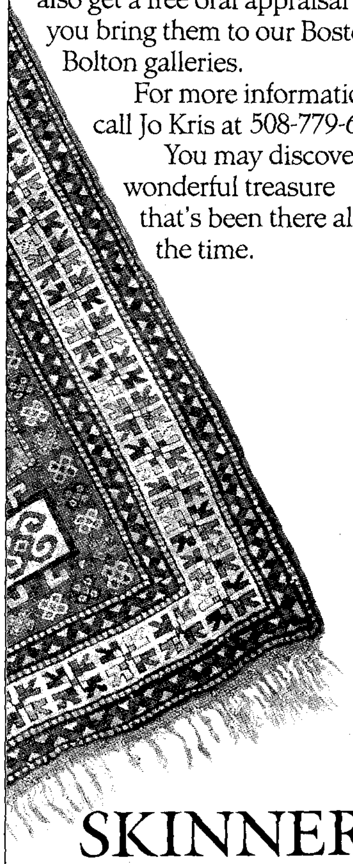

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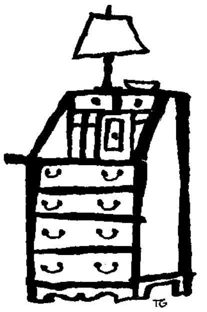
apprehensive. In 1842, half the people in Canada were of French origin, but by 1990 the half had been reduced to something like a quarter, and now it is feared that one day they could become a minority even in their own province. The problem is that over the past thirty years the influence of the Catholic Church in Quebec has waned, and there has been a precipitous drop in Quebec's birth rate, which was once the highest in North America; in the past, families of a dozen children were not uncommon. This punishing level of reproduction, which seemed to me to be based on the assumption that women were sows, was encouraged with impunity from the sidelines by l'Abbé Lionel Groulx, whose newspaper *L'Action Française*, founded in 1917, preached *la revanche des berceaux*, the revenge of the cradles, which would enable French Canadians to become the majority in Canada. By 1990, however, the Quebec birth rate was 1.5, the lowest in the Western world except for West Germany's, while the rate that was called for just to replenish the existing population was 2.1.

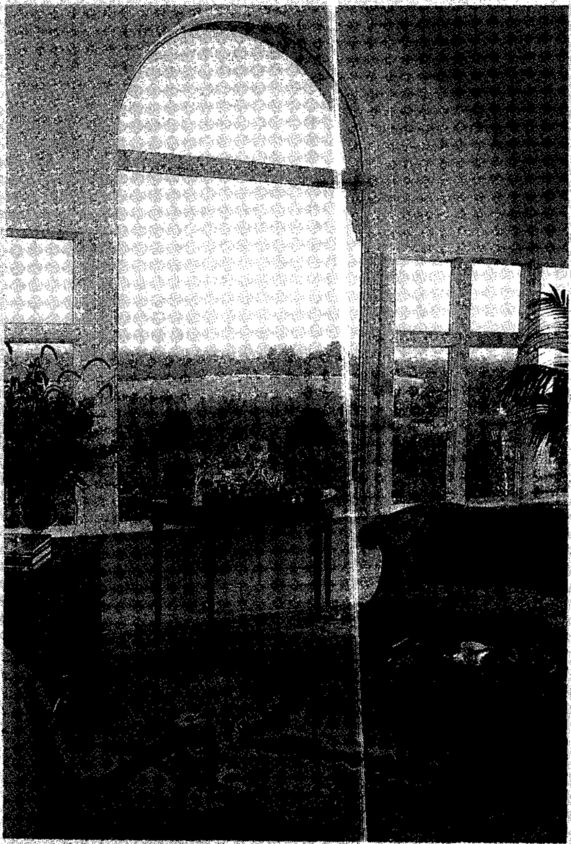


So far, immigration—the alternative method of boosting Quebec's French-speaking population—has exacerbated the situation. For years now, the majority of the Italian, Greek, and Portuguese immigrants have wanted their children educated in English, the language of opportunity in North America. In 1968, the Catholic school board of the Montreal suburb of Saint-Léonard responded by attempting to deny education in English to its largely Italian population. Ugly riots ensued, and then, a year later, temporary respite when the provincial government of the day introduced Bill 63, which allowed parents to choose the language of their children's education. This, in turn, enraged many of Quebec's increasingly nationalistic intellectuals, spawning a commission of inquiry into language rights, and the province began sinking into that linguistic quagmire that has yielded Bills 22, 101, and 178, and a disconcertingly tribal society.

Bill 22, passed by Premier Robert Bourassa's Liberal government in 1974, ruled that the children of immigrants had to be enrolled in French schools. "The only exceptions were children who could demonstrate 'a sufficient knowledge' of English," the late René Lévesque, who in October of 1968 founded the Parti Québécois and was premier from 1976 to 1985, wrote in his memoir. "So tests were imposed on little shavers six and seven years old isolated from their parents, who were boiling mad at the whole business. Without going quite that far, I wasn't very hot on the plan myself." In 1975, when the quarrel over Bill 22 was at its height, a senior adviser to Premier Bourassa told a reporter that not much could be done about so-called clandestine schools—"short of drastically rewriting the law to flatly exclude immigrant children whose mother tongue is not English from English schools." In 1977, a year after René Lévesque rode into office, the Parti Québécois introduced Bill 101, the French Language Charter, which went even further than Bill 22. Bill 101 ordained that wherever a child came from—from abroad, or even from another Canadian province—it had to be educated in French unless one of its parents had attended an English school in Quebec. It also ordered the "Francization" of any company with more than fifty employees, and said that such companies would soon require a certificate to prove that they conducted all their internal business in French. It declared that all English, or even bilingual, commercial signs would be illegal by 1981. It established the Commission de Toponymie to rename towns, rivers, and mountains that bore English names, which were an offense to the *visage linguistique* of *la belle province*. And it pronounced French the province's only official language—a violation of the British North America Act and a rejection of the two-century-old convention that had endowed French and English with equal legitimacy. Sure enough, a problem soon developed. According to a clause in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the child of a parent who had been educated in English, at the primary level, anywhere in Canada was entitled to an English-language education in Quebec. This resulted in a suit brought against the government by the Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards. The case went to the Quebec Superior Court, and on September 8, 1982, it ruled that the Charter took precedence over Bill 101. The Quebec government's argument "demonstrates a totalitarian concept of society to which the court cannot subscribe," Chief Justice Jules Deschênes concluded. "Other societies put the collectivity above the individual [but] this conception of society has not yet taken root here—even if certain political initiatives seem at times to be courting it dangerously.... Every individual in Canada and Quebec should enjoy his rights in their entirety, be he alone, or a member of a group; and if the group has one hundred members, the hundredth has as much right to benefit from all his privileges as do the ninety-nine others."

The Lévesque government served notice of its intention to appeal. Then, in 1985, Robert Bourassa, who had been displaced as leader of the Liberal Party by Claude Ryan in 1978 and written off at the time as a burnt-out case, was back at his old job, and was running for premier again. Above all, Bourassa is a survivor. Perpetually vacillating, suspected of being a covert separatist by many English Quebecers, unloved by the French, mocked as a wimp by both communities, he was thrust into office in the first place when he was a mere thirty-six-year-old, because he was taken for an economic wizard, somebody who could put the shop in order, and there was something in that. Before long, however, he became an object of ridicule, hardly ever seen in public without his gun-toting personal hairdresser. Nevertheless, in 1985 he was the only real alternative to a divided and no longer coherent Parti Québécois, exhausted after nine turbulent years in office. Bourassa promised that if he was elected he would amend Bill 101 to allow bilingual commercial signs as long as the French lettering was predominant. "When I am premier, I will be able to make tough decisions within a hundred days whatever the short-term political consequences," he said. But once he was returned to power, on December 2, 1985, winning ninety-nine out of a hundred and twenty-two seats, he had second thoughts. He decided that before relaxing the sign law he would wait for a decision on its legality from the Quebec Court of Appeal. Meanwhile, in the dead of that winter, Gilles Rhéaume, an ardent *indépendantiste*, infuriated because the Parti Québécois had temporarily put its sovereignty policy on the back burner, announced that he would march the hundred and fifty-eight miles from Montreal to Quebec City, where he would piss on the statue of the conqueror, General James Wolfe, on the Plains of Abraham. On arrival, he also had second thoughts. He decided it was too cold and pleaded with his small band of followers to consider the act done.

The following autumn, Bourassa was still dithering, although he did tell a reporter for the Montreal daily *Le Devoir* that "nowhere in the free world is there a country where the minority is prohibited from using its own language on its signs." On December 22nd, to nobody's surprise, five Quebec Court of Appeal judges ruled, unanimously, that the prohibiting of languages other than French on commercial signs was a violation of freedom of expression as protected by both the Canadian and the Quebec Charters of Rights and Freedoms. In a second ruling, the Appeal Court judges voted, three to two, that Quebec did have the power to prevent



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the display of unilingual English signs.

Then Premier Bourassa had third thoughts, saying that the sign law couldn't be revoked until the Supreme Court of Canada had pronounced. It fell to the affable Herbert Marx, an old high-school acquaintance of mine, who was then Minister of Justice, to argue Quebec's appeal before the highest court in the land. Marx was obliged to present his case at a time when a public-opinion poll showed that three out of four Quebecers favored bilingual signs. Mind you, nationalists were also making their feelings known—to shopkeepers in Montreal, who had challenged the law in court or simply ignored it. Rocks were thrown through the windows of the McKenna Côte des Neiges florist and Nat's Auto Parts. Fire bombs were tossed at one of Zeller's chain stores, and bomb threats were called in to two downtown department stores—Ogilvy and Simpson.

Next, the father of Bill 101, the obdurate Camille Laurin, was heard from, in an interview with *Le Devoir*. Dr. Laurin, a psychiatrist who had become the head of psychiatry at the Institut Albert-Prévost, in Montreal, since serving eight years in the Parti Québécois cabinet, including his stint as Minister of Cultural Development from 1976 to 1980, put all of Anglophone Quebec on the couch. The banning of English was shock therapy, he said, and Quebec's English-speaking citizens had been disturbed by it only "because they define themselves above all as Canadians who live in Quebec." Furthermore, he said, Bill 101 had ended the "scandal" of free choice, whereby immigrants could actually send their children to English rather than French schools. Dr. Laurin was possibly unaware that the immigrant problem was already remedying itself.

In August of 1987, Alliance Quebec, a lobbying group for English, presented a brief to the National Assembly. It revealed that since 1972 there had been a net population loss of almost two hundred and ninety-four thousand in the province of Quebec. Between 1976 and 1981, some hundred and six thousand three hundred English-speaking Quebecers, nineteen and a half per cent of whom held university degrees, had moved out. "The tendency for young adults of childbearing years to be overrepresented in this departure has also diminished the capacity of our community to replenish itself demographically," the Alliance's brief declared. "The result is an aging community with fewer children." But as far as Léon Dion, an influential professor of political science at Laval University, in Quebec City, was concerned, it was the cultural future of *his* community that was being threatened. On May 14, 1987, he told a National Assembly committee hearing briefs on the Meech Lake constitutional accord, "If Montreal is left to so-called bilingualism, this means in less than ten years a kind of English unilingualism."

Reed Scowen, a Liberal Assembly member from Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, in Montreal, studying the problem from all angles, summed things up in his farewell speech to the National Assembly that summer: "If I follow the reasoning of both sides to its logical conclusion, in two generations there won't be a single Anglophone left in Quebec, but everybody will be speaking English."

In the spring, as Canadians were waiting for their Supreme Court to pronounce on Bill 101, an editorial writer for *La Presse* pleaded with Premier Bourassa to allow bilingual signs, in the name of fundamental justice. The board of directors of the Conseil du Patronat, Quebec's largest employers' group, voted unanimously in favor of bilingual signs with French predominant, once the Supreme Court had ruled. The most stinging rebuke to Quebec came from another one of their own—D'Iberville Fortier, then the federal Official Languages Commissioner. In his annual report to Parliament, Fortier said that English-speaking Quebecers had been "humiliated" by restrictions on their language in the province. A livid Premier Bourassa denied the accusation, and when the opposition Parti Québécois sponsored a motion to censure Fortier's statement Bourassa quickly toughened the motion's wording, and it was passed unanimously. It read:

> That this National Assembly firmly denounces the statements made by the federal commissioner of official languages in regard to the English-speaking minority of Quebec, and calls upon the official in question to give an explanation.
>
> That the National Assembly reaffirms having exercised its linguistic powers always in a fully democratic manner so as to ensure the survival of the French collectivity and check the threat of anglicization.

The banner headline on the front

page of the next morning's *Gazette* read like a charge sheet:

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Despite Urging of Constituents to
Rebel or At Least Abstain

Some twenty-five thousand Québécois nationalists, anticipating a Supreme Court decision that would declare the sign law illegal, took to the streets of Montreal to protest, chanting, "*Le Québec au Québécois*," and, not for the first time, a nervous Premier Bourassa began to talk about the need to preserve "social peace."

At the Parti Québécois's convention, in November, the new Party leader, Jacques Parizeau, announced that he was resolutely opposed to bilingual signs, and came out in favor of reducing the number of English radio and television stations in Montreal and of intensifying the Francization program, making it apply to firms with ten employees or more. Ironically, the patrician Parizeau, a committed *indépendantiste*, is also a dedicated Anglophile: he is a graduate of the London School of Economics and an admirer of Queen Elizabeth. On record as an uncompromising opponent of a bilingual Montreal, he insisted on an English-speaking governess for his own children. He is a son of the Québécois bourgeoisie, a sixth-generation Montrealer, his father having stitched together the biggest insurance brokerage in Montreal. A sybarite of considerable girth, Parizeau seems to have sprung larger than life out of a P. G. Wodehouse novel, and exclamations of "By Jove!" and "Jolly good!" liberally punctuate his English. "The Parti Québécois should be sovereignist before the election, during the election, and after the election," he said.

Camille Laurin, returned to the fold, addressed the Parti Québécois convention in November, reminding the faithful that before he had been to the mountaintop in 1977, and brought down Bill 101, Quebec was "still dominated by a foreign power"—that is to say, Ottawa, where the Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau, was a Quebecer, as were several important Cabinet Ministers, seventy-five M.P.s out of a total of two hundred and ninety-five, three out of nine Supreme Court Justices, the Governor-General, and thousands of civil servants. But when Laurin deliv-

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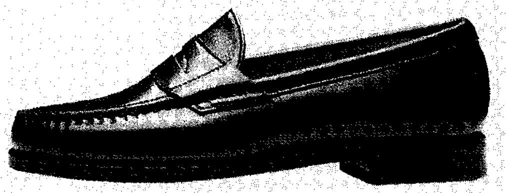

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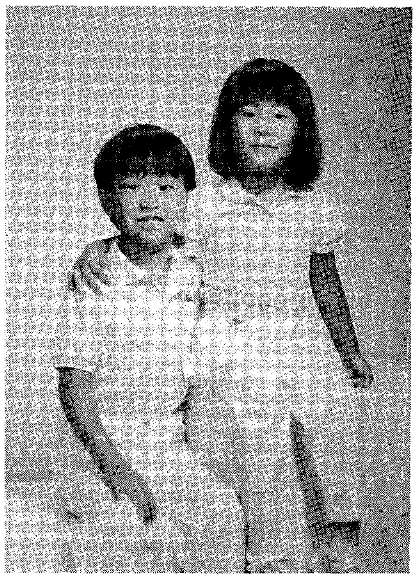

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ered his sermon nobody was particularly worried about the seemingly moribund Parti Québécois, which was badly in need of funds and was running low in the polls, the choice of a mere twenty-eight per cent of the electorate.

Early in December of 1988, almost two years after the Quebec Court of Appeal ruled on the sign law, the Supreme Court announced that it would deliver its judgment on Section 58 of Bill 101 on the fifteenth of the month.

Premier Bourassa, who had procrastinated over the problem for three years, promised that his response would be "calm, lucid, and serene." He had already let it be known that the solution he fancied was to allow bilingual signs inside but French-only signs outside. Then, as had been anticipated, the Supreme Court ruled the sign law illegal. Actually, there were two court judgments. The first answered a challenge to Section 58 of Bill 101 by five businesses: Chaussure Browns, McKenna, Masson Tailors & Cleaners, the National Cheese Company, and Valerie Ford—all of which challenged the notion that commercial signs in Quebec had to be in French only. The second judgment dealt with the case of Allan Singer, a truculent seventy-six-year-old Anglophone printer and stationer, and the legality of English signs only.

In the first case, the court ruled unanimously that "language is so intimately related to the form and content of expression that there cannot be true freedom of expression by means of language if one is prohibited from using the language of one's choice." Then, leaning on Quebec's own Charter of Rights, passed by the Parti Québécois government in 1975, the court declared the sign law a clear violation of freedom of expression and stated that a ban on other languages was not needed to defend the French language. However, ruling against Allan Singer in the second case, the court did endorse Quebec's right to legislate the promotion of French in order to protect the province's *visage linguistique*. Though the court stated that in its opinion exclusivity for the French language did not reflect the reality of Quebec, it did rule that the province was entitled to pass a law requiring the predominant display of the French language, and even its marked predominance. "The predominant language [of Quebec] is French," the court said. "This reality should be communicated to all citizens and non-citizens alike, irrespective of their mother tongue."

Allan Singer, who had appeared in court forty-five times since 1978, spending a hundred and twenty thousand dollars of his own and supporters' money, immediately threatened to take his case to the United Nations. "No damned government is going to tell me to take down my English sign," he told reporters.

On Monday, Premier Bourassa invoked the notwithstanding clause and then introduced a bill in the National Assembly—Bill 178—that would ban English on outdoor signs but allow it and other languages on indoor signs, provided that French was predominant. He knew that this was difficult for the English-speaking minority to accept, he said, but he implored them to look at the sunny side of this legislation. After all, they had gained the right to post indoor bilingual signs if the French was predominant.

Premier Bourassa's inside/outside solution managed to alienate just about everybody in the province. Alliance Quebec warned that his decision, unspeakably repressive, could lead to another English exodus, and thousands of aroused Québécois nationalists filled the Paul Sauvé Arena to protest what they interpreted as his retreat.

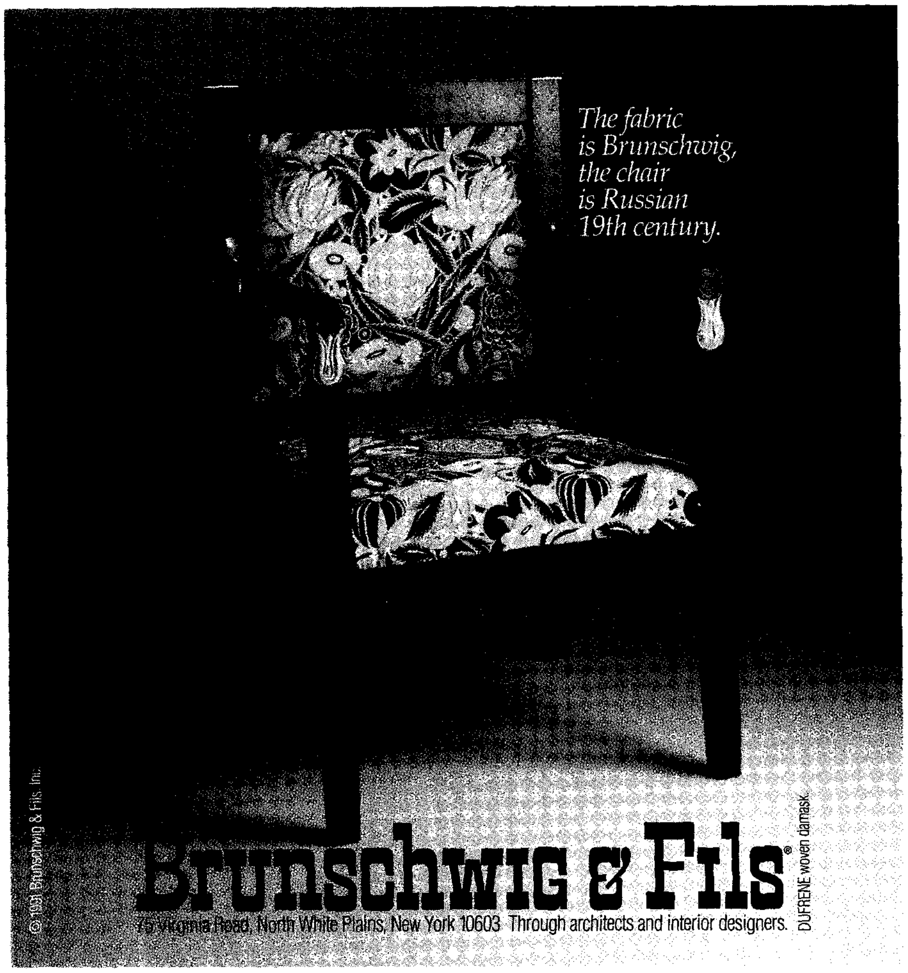
The Prime Minister of Canada, Brian Mulroney, took his own inside/outside approach to the problem. Speaking in French, in the House of Commons, he said, "It is important to emphasize that Quebec has no lessons to learn from anyone regarding its way of treating its language minorities. . . . I think Quebec is a leader in the field." But once outside the House, speaking in English to reporters, he said, "I happen to believe a charter of *rights is inconsistent* with the capacity of someone else to override your rights and mine." He also told Parliament that he had asked Premier Bourassa not to invoke the notwithstanding clause.

The next day, three of Premier Bourassa's English-speaking ministers—Clifford Lincoln, Herbert Marx, and Richard French—resigned from the Cabinet and announced that they would vote against Bill 178. Lincoln's speech in the National Assembly moved some of his Francophone colleagues to tears. "In my belief, rights are rights and will always be rights," he said. "There are no inside rights and no outside rights. . . . There are no partial rights. . . . Rights are fundamental links in a chain of fundamental values that bind all individuals in the society; they must be inalienable, just, and fair."

Responding to the resignations, Premier Bourassa risked attack by making a rare speech in English in the National Assembly. Addressing himself to Quebec's English-speaking community, he insisted that, as political leader of a collectivity representing less than two per cent of the population of North America, he had had no choice in the matter. He pleaded with *les autres* to be understanding. Bourassa found an unlikely ally in D'Iberville Fortier, the Official Languages Commissioner, who had maintained almost a year earlier that Bill 101 humiliated Quebec's English-speaking minority. In a carefully worded three-page statement, Fortier pointed out that it was French, not English, that was the threatened language. "Quebec has traditionally shown more generosity toward its Anglophone minority than was required of it by constitutional or legislative documents," he said.

Then Prime Minister Mulroney, who had been battered by the parliamentary opposition for his fancy footwork, made another pass at Bill 178. Speaking outside the House, he said that he disapproved of Quebec's invoking the notwithstanding clause to suspend minority rights, asking reporters, "How can a Parliament say, 'We have now legislated your inalienable rights, and by the way I forgot to tell you these rights can be overridden by a premier'?" Once inside the House, however, he added that he would not demand that Premier Bourassa revoke Bill 178. If anyone was to blame for the current situation, he charged, it was the former Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau, which had allowed the notwithstanding clause to slip into the constitution in the first place.

The same day, Premier Bourassa amended Bill 178, tightening the screws. It was now ruled that franchise outlets with more than five employees would not be allowed to post indoor bilingual signs. Even so, he was attacked by the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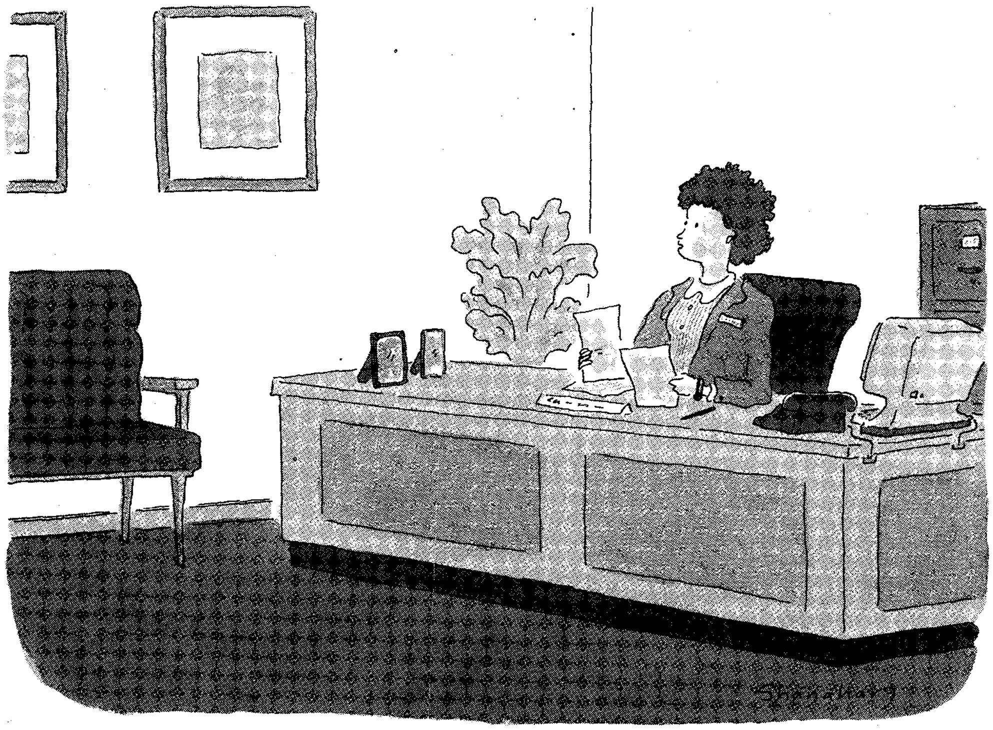


*"Your records clearly indicate that you should be visible to the naked eye, Mr. Preston."*

• •

Parti Québécois for backsliding on the strictures of Bill 101. In response, the Premier protested that he had gone further than the Parti Québécois ever had to impose French on the province, and he vowed that Montreal, twenty per cent of whose population speaks English, would never look like a bilingual city. But when the minister then in charge of the French Language Charter tried to explain how the government would enforce "markedly predominant" French in those stores where inside bilingual signs would still be tolerated, the explanation was greeted with laughter from the opposition and from its own backbenchers. What he said was "It's not the size of the letters. It's not the color of the letters. It's not their placement higher or lower, to the left or to the right of French compared with English. It's not the size of the signs. It's not the number of the signs. It's all of that."

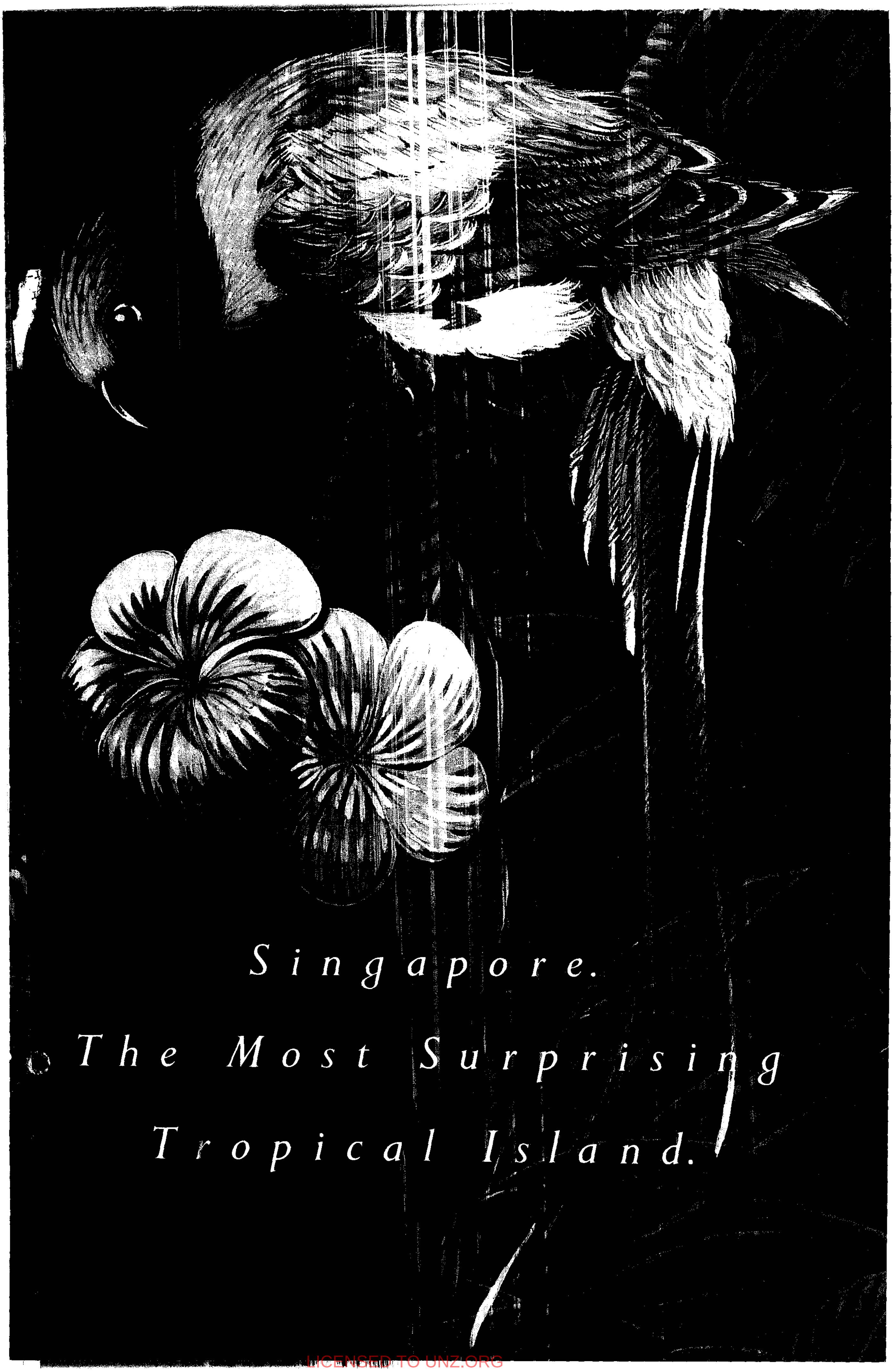
A Quebec civil servant I met with, who requested that he not be identified by name, conceded that the new law was fatuous, but added that *les anglais* had only themselves to blame. "From the very introduction of Bill 101, eleven years ago, they surprised us by being timorous beyond belief," he said. "When Eaton's, Ogilvy's, and Steinberg's and the rest were asked to shed their apostrophes"—one form of Francization stipulated in the bill—"why didn't they just stand together, denounce the law as lunatic, and refuse to comply? Do you think their directors would have been hanged or imprisoned for life? Nonsense. Rather than risk ridicule abroad, the Parti Québécois would have retreated, and that would have been that."

The year ended badly. Fires were set in English-language schools in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and Quebec City. Then, on December 30th, somebody put the torch to the downtown Montreal offices of Alliance Quebec, causing two hundred thousand dollars in damages. At the time, the Alliance claimed forty thousand members, but its demands had been so mild that irritated members of what should have been its natural constituency had dubbed it Compliance Quebec. Suddenly, however, the lobby group was talking tough. Its president, Royal Orr, warned that a number of English-speaking Quebecers were thinking of taking to the streets or forming new political-protest parties. "I'm still not convinced that . . . civil disobedience is the answer," he said, "but I'm not going to condemn anybody who chooses that route."

Early in the new year, as the language wars continued to escalate, a Gallup Poll revealed that, on the one hand, sixty-one per cent of Quebecers believed that bilingual signs should be tolerated in the province, while, on the other hand, seventy-seven per cent felt that it was more important for French-speaking Quebecers to preserve their culture than to honor the freedom of speech of English-speaking Quebecers. Then, on January 20, 1989, the tabloid *Journal de Montréal* ran an explosive headline: "TOUT NOUS CONDUIT À ROYAL ORR." Quoting an anonymous police source, the *Journal* accused Orr of having set fire to his own offices in order to discredit Quebec nationalists. Orr denounced the story as a "deliberate and vicious attempt to defame" him and filed suit for four hundred thousand dollars in damages. The case against Quebecor, the publisher of the *Journal*, has yet to be heard.

ON January 10th, Premier Bourassa, still trying to work out Bill 178 guidelines, promised new sign rules on March 14th. Meanwhile, the Mouvement Québec Français organized a march of ten thousand in Montreal to demonstrate against the threat of bilingual signs inside stores. An even larger peril for Francophones was predicted by a TV documentary shown on Radio-Canada warning that disappearance was the inevitable fate of North America's French Canadian nation. It was called "*Disparaître: Le sort inévitable de la nation française d'Amérique.*"

As the opening credits rolled, the cameras focussed on a reunion of the Tremblay clan in Chicoutimi, all of them *québécois de vieille souche;* that is, white, Catholic, and French-speaking, with roots that ran to many generations. A family spokesman, addressing the Tremblays, exhorted them to "wake up and multiply!" Then Lise Payette, the former Parti Québécois Cabinet Minister who narrated the film, broke in ominously, "*Les Tremblays sont menacés! La nation, aussi!*" Mme. Payette, who writes prime-time soap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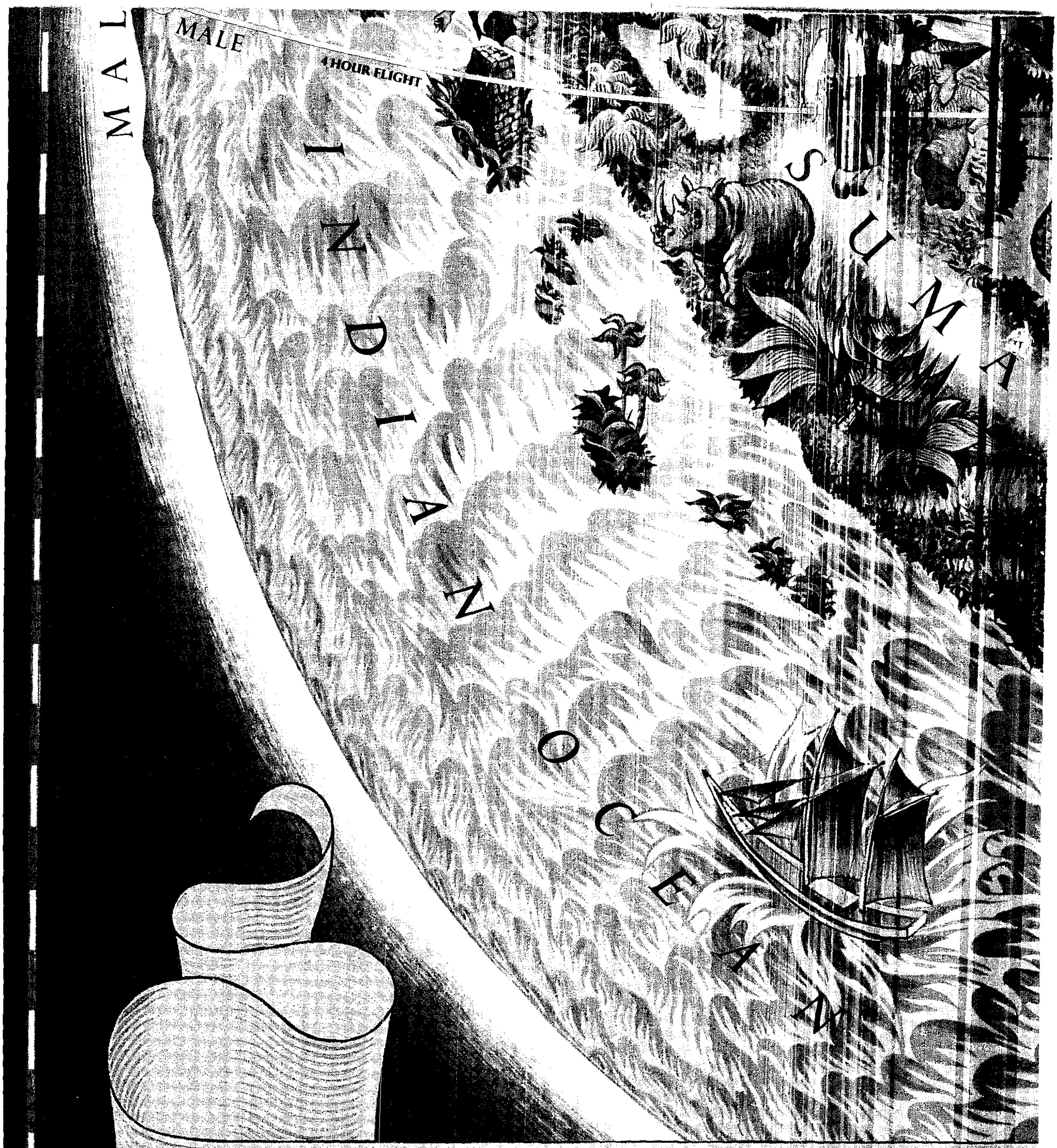

❶ *Bangkok —Vibrant nightlife, quiet temples. A silent sea of candles marks Buddha's birthday in the May moonlight, and the tranquil Lak Muang shrine grants wishes. Singapore Airlines flies 38 times a week.*

❷ *Pattaya — Golden sands, deep blue sea, lobster for lunch and sparkling nightlife. Sapphire mines nearby. Tradewinds* flies twice weekly.*

❸ *Phuket — Paradise on Sea, but watch out for amazing giant turtles staggering up the beach between Dec. and Feb. Tradewinds flies daily.*

❹ *Hatyai — Stroll through the ribcage of the world's largest reclining Buddha, and see a Sunday fight of the famous, hump-backed bulls. Tradewinds flies nine times a week.*

❺ *Yangon — Festivals with every full moon. Schwedagon Pagoda will astonish you with its gold spires studded in precious stones. Tradewinds flights twice weekly.*

❻ *Manila — In the city that curves around the Bay, any event's a fiesta, and every other citizen's a performer. Tremendous nightlife. Carnivals on C*
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❼ *Cebu — Historic c*
*Magellan's Cross. [illegible] the*
*Panay Island in the biza*
*festival in January. Singa*
*twice weekly.*

❽ *Langkawi — Plung*
*vines and climb a bambo*
*of Legends. Idyllic island*
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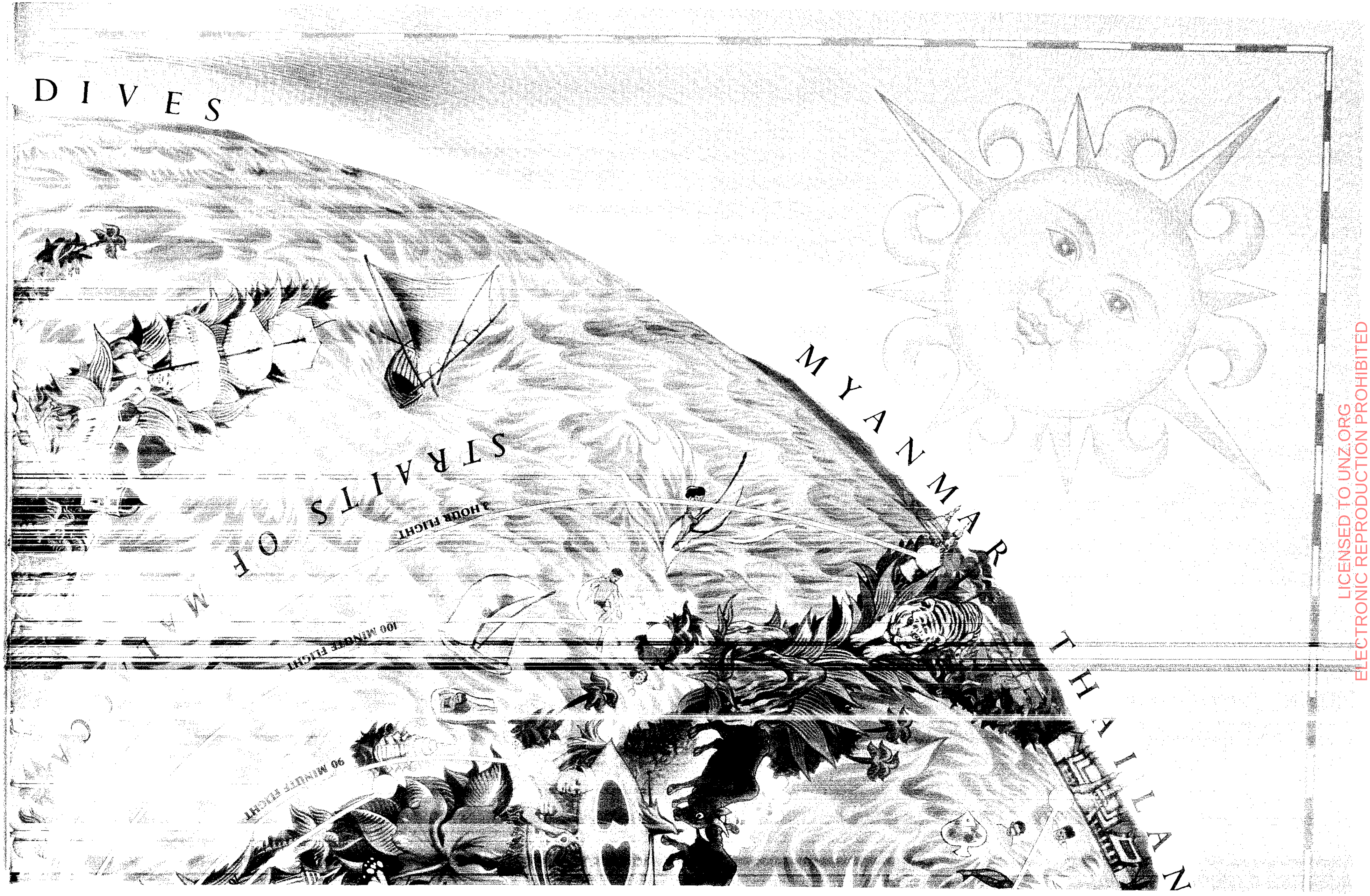
*from November, 1991.*

**Tradewinds is an airline subsidiary of Singapore Airlines.*

†*MAS is Malaysia Airline*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❶ *Chinatown - Goldsmiths, calligraphers, medicine men with miracle cures, fortune-tellers. August for open-air opera. Jan/Feb for Lunar New Year festivities.*

❷ *Little India - Where the locals go for curry on a banana leaf, spices, sarees, trinkets. Oct/Nov for Festival of Lights.*

❸ *Arab Street - Singapore's oldest Moslem neighbourhood.*

❹ *Haw Par Villa - High-tech theme park embroils you in the lurid legends of Old China.*

❺ *Bugis Street - You've heard the sailors' tales? Now plunge into the non-stop party.*

❻ *Telok Ayer - Food stalls, where live performers bring new life to the old market place.*

❼ *Tang Dynasty Village - Huge, tranquil theme park with an astonishing Imperial Palace.*

❽ *Sentosa - Landscaped resort island, just four minutes away.*

❾ *Tanjong Pagar - Traditional trades and trendy restaurants, in old Chinese shophouses.*

❿ *The Zoo - Beautiful, open-plan, tropical safari park offers breakfast with an orangutan.*

⓫ *The Merlion - The national symbol that's half lion, half fish.*

⓬ *Jurong Bird Park - Over 4,500 birds in a garden where a parrot rides a bike.*

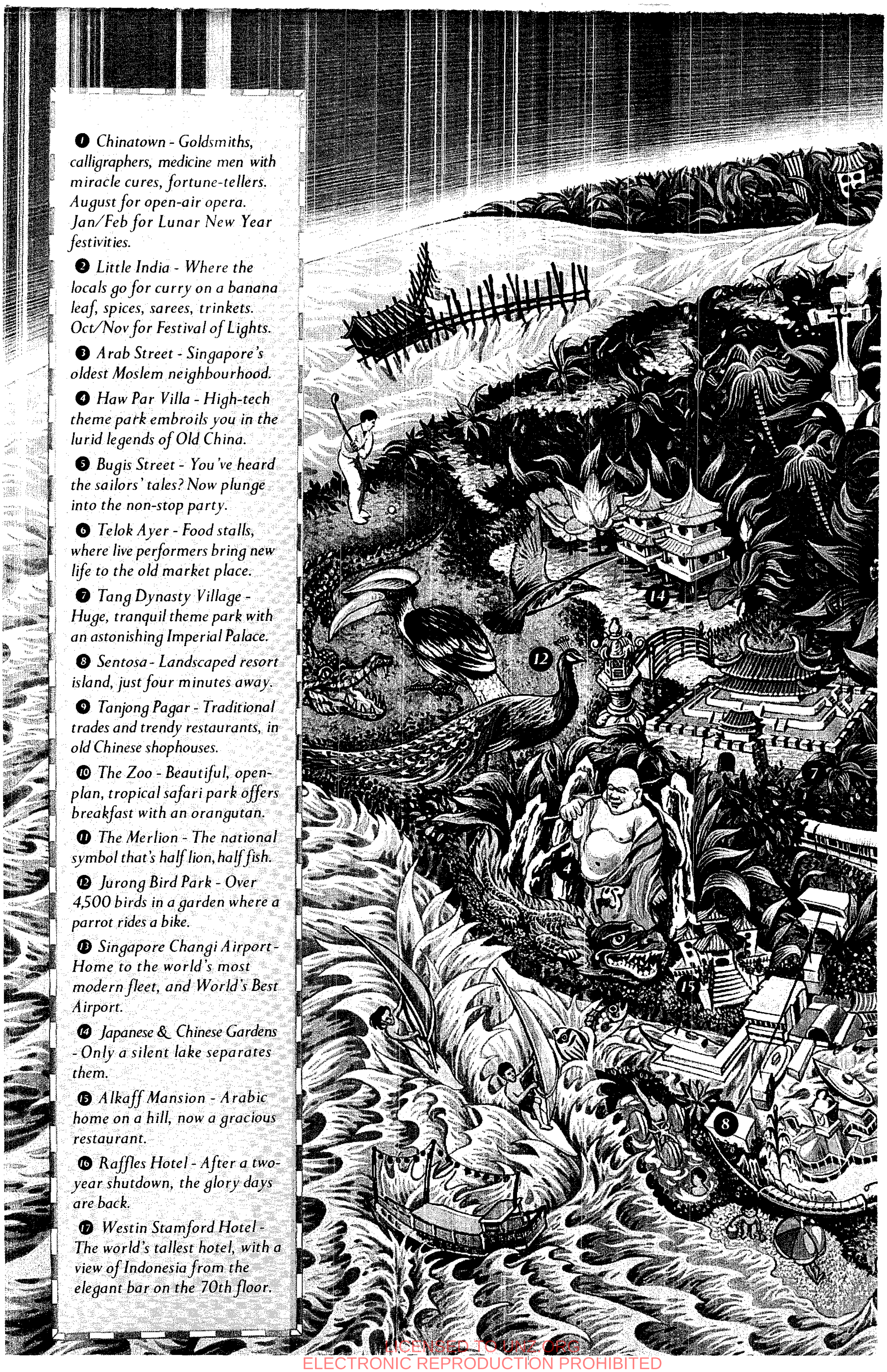
⓭ *Singapore Changi Airport - Home to the world's most modern fleet, and World's Best Airport.*

⓮ *Japanese & Chinese Gardens - Only a silent lake separates them.*

⓯ *Alkaff Mansion - Arabic home on a hill, now a gracious restaurant.*

⓰ *Raffles Hotel - After a two-year shutdown, the glory days are back.*

⓱ *Westin Stamford Hotel - The world's tallest hotel, with a view of Indonesia from the elegant bar on the 70th floor.*



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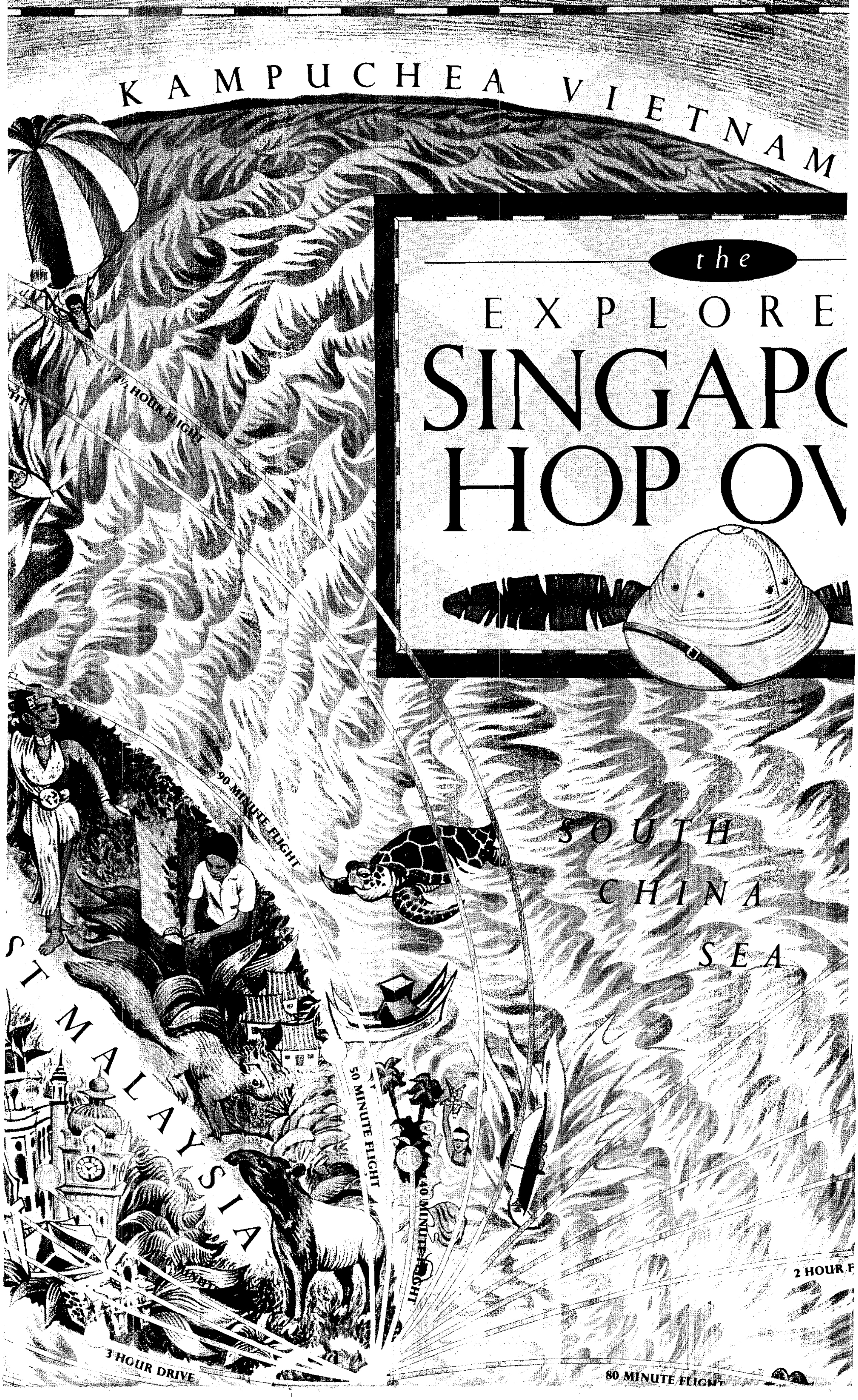
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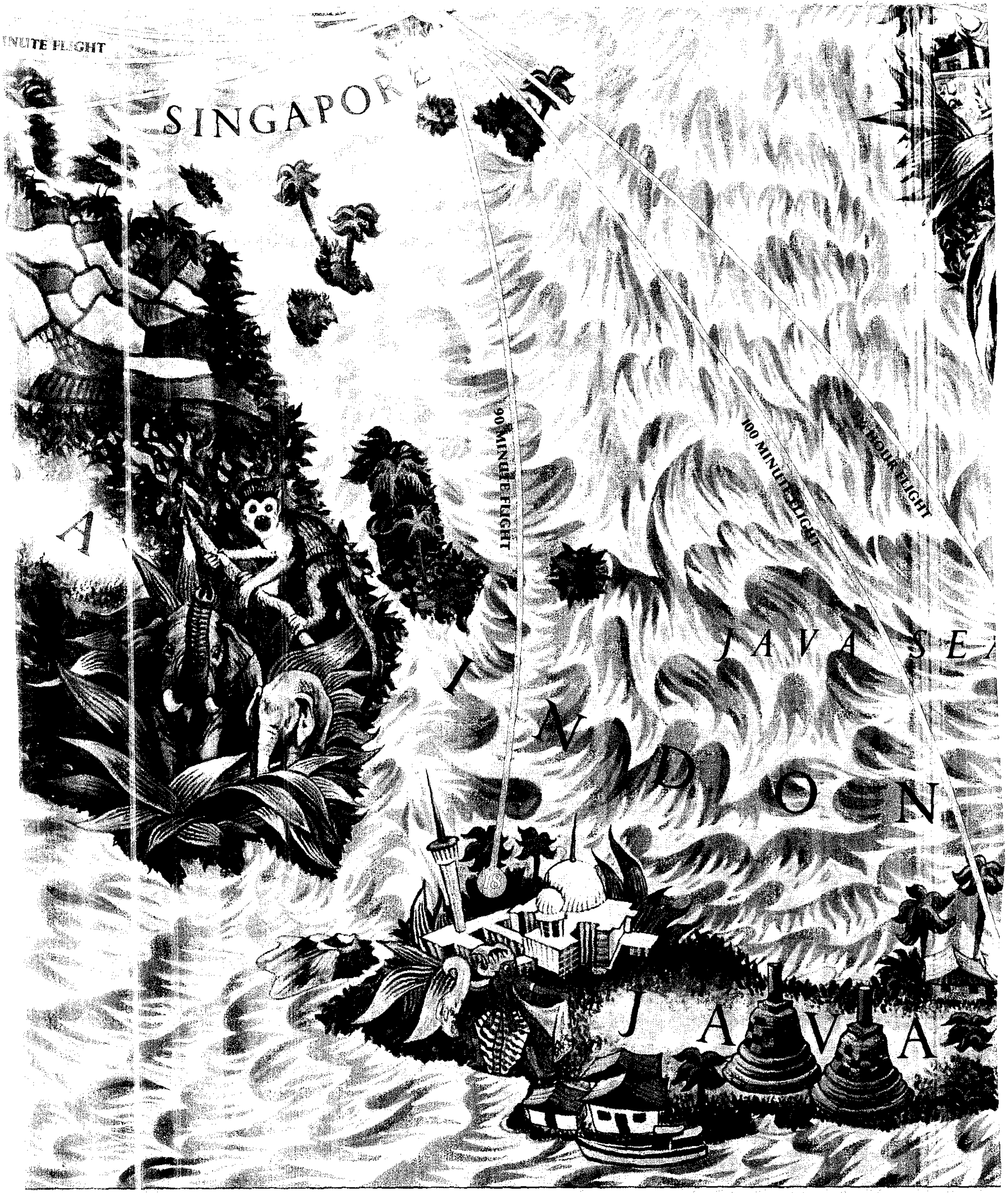

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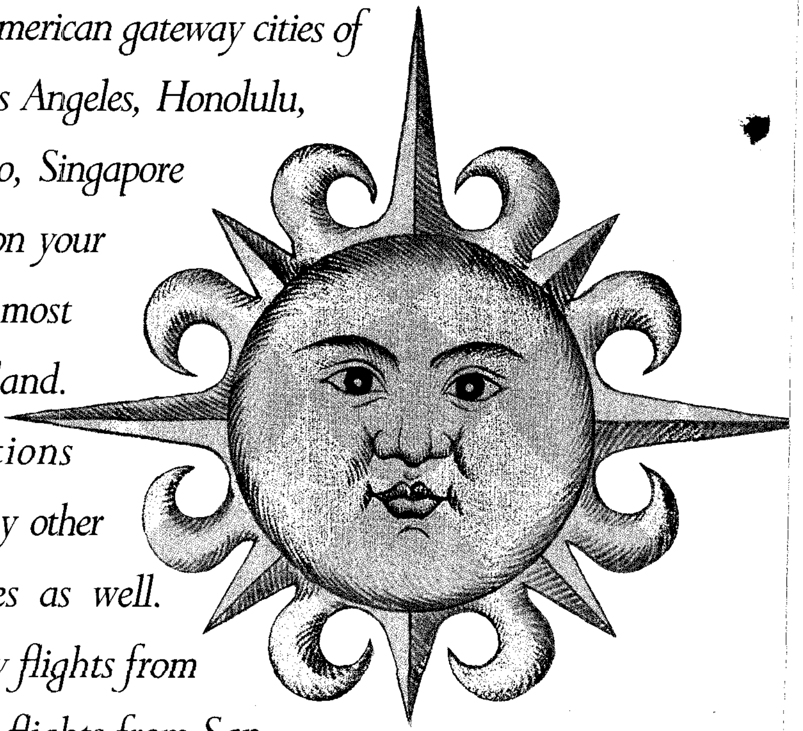

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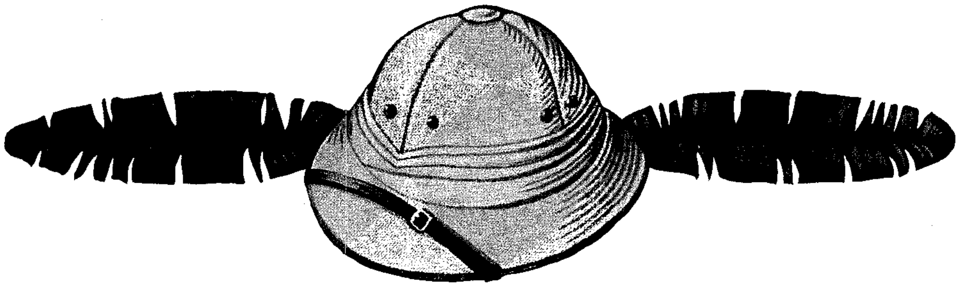

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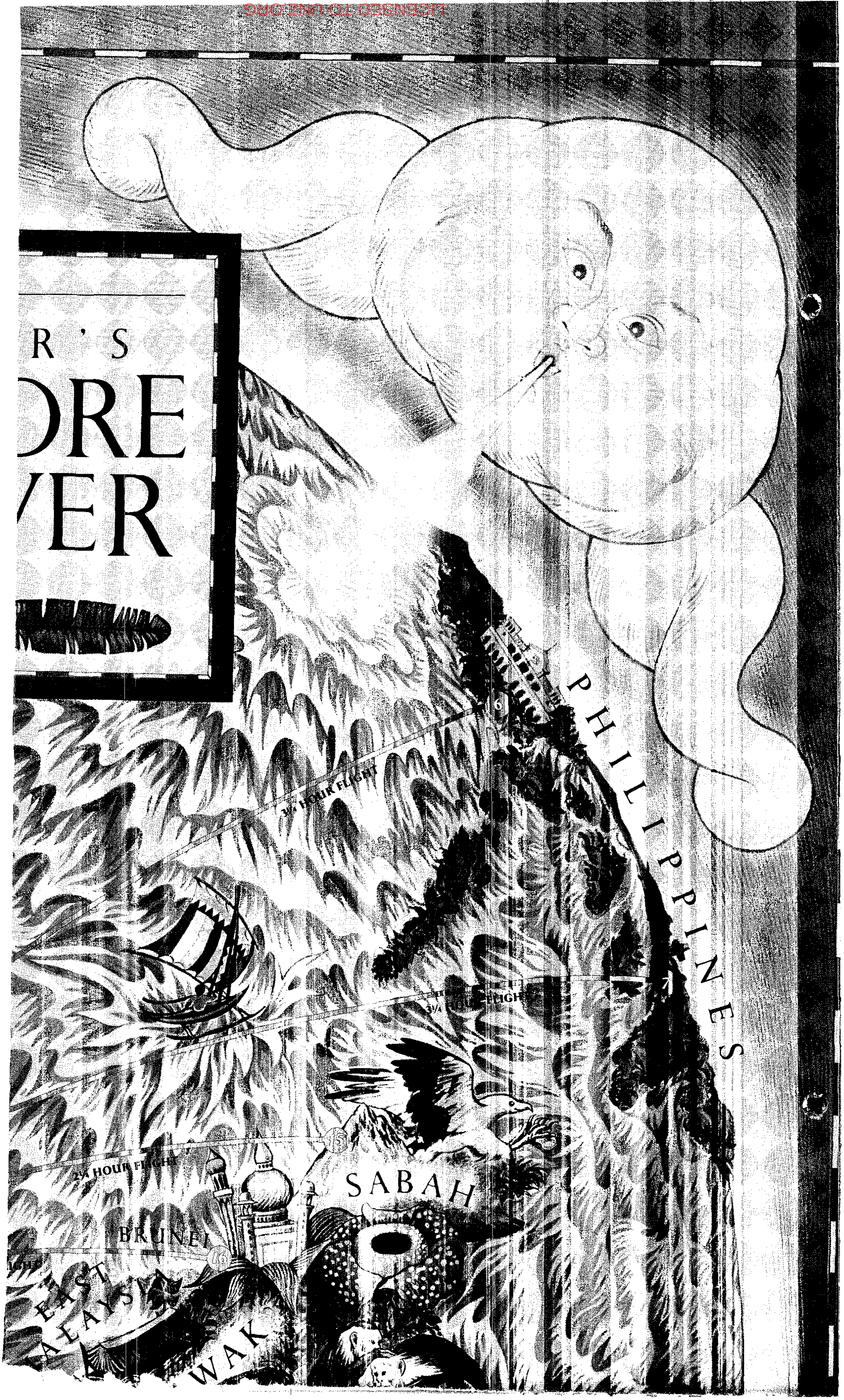
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*Flight information as of 1 September, 1991.*

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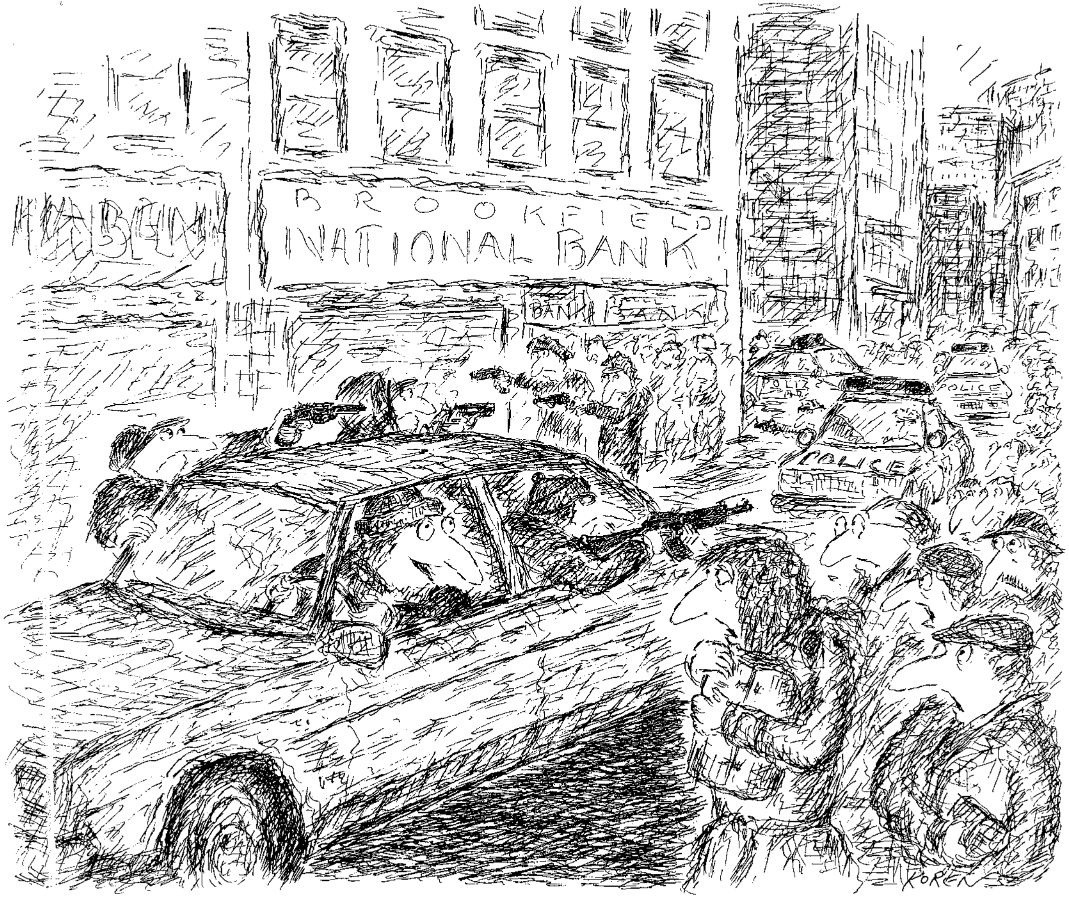

*"I'm only doing this to support my writing."*

• •

operas for Radio-Canada, warned that racial problems would occur in any city once a minority grew to fourteen per cent of the population, and in Montreal the minorities by then accounted for eighteen per cent. "We're already living dangerously," she said.

Viewers saw exactly how dangerously when the film shifted to Marseilles, where the North African minority was a problem, and then on to racially tainted England, where we were shown a British mum who had yanked her kid out of school because, she said, "He started singing nursery rhymes at home in Punjabi and Urdu."

The most fascinating statistic in "*Disparaître*"—understandably passed over on the fly—was that of the five hundred and sixteen thousand immigrants who had come to Quebec since 1969 some three hundred and twelve thousand took a good look around and skedaddled. Even so, a Jesuit priest interviewed in the film anticipated violence in Quebec and urged that immigration should be restricted to countries compatible with Quebec's culture.

That week, *La Presse* began a seven-part series, "*Franciser ou Disparaître*," in which it was argued that it wasn't sufficient for immigrants to learn French: "It is relatively easy to teach immigrants French. It is much harder to integrate them into the Francophone majority, to bring them to adopt our culture and our values, to make of them Québécois as the children we won't have would have been."

Next, the host of a radio talk show put a decidedly saucy question to the women in his phone-in audience: "To avoid our disappearance, would you be willing to have a baby out of patriotism?"

There was soon another spur to fecundity: money. Come spring, the voice of Robert Bourassa was heard in the land, introducing a "cash for kids" policy: the government was offering a five-hundred-dollar payment for the first child, a thousand dollars for the second, and forty-five hundred for each additional child.

While the province waited for the Bill 178 guidelines, Premier Bourassa, responding to Parti Québécois heat, announced that there would definitely be no more amendments. Rumors to the contrary, department and chain stores would not be allowed to post any bilingual signs inside, and the government would be "very, very vigilant" about imposing this restriction. Strictly as a safety measure, it would tolerate bilingual signs on ski slopes, pointing out "PRÉCIPICES" and other hazards, rather than risk losing American tourists, but there was no substance to a *Le Devoir* report that bilingual highway signs would also be sanctioned; for example, a warning indicating "DYNAMITING AHEAD" was out.

Even as Premier Bourassa protected his nationalist flank, he found himself under attack from the other side. The Anglophone president of Ingersoll-Rand Canada, which had its headquarters in Kirkland, a suburb of Montreal, announced that instead of building a new plant in Valleyfield, Quebec, that would have created a hundred jobs, he would invest thirty million dollars in a facility in Downsview, Ontario. "If the government can eliminate individual rights just like that, then they can eliminate something else in the future," he said in an interview. "Who knows what else this province is capable of doing?"

On Sunday, March 12th, nationalists took to the streets of Montreal again. This time, some sixty thousand of them marched to protest Premier Bourassa's decision to allow bilingual signs inside some Quebec stores. Among the demonstrators were the Québécois pop singers René and Nathalie Simard, sometimes described as the Donny and Marie Osmond of Quebec. "We were raised in French," René burbled to a TV interviewer, "and I want my children to suffer the same fate." Then, realizing what he had said, he hastily added, "The same beautiful fate, if I may say so."

Fifteen hundred jeering French-language activists greeted Premier Bourassa outside the National Assembly when it reconvened a couple of days later. Inside, the Premier, who three years earlier had pronounced the banning of English on public signs as "totally unacceptable," boasted that his government, showing courage, had outdone the Parti Québécois in putting it to *les autres*. "Never before in the history of Quebec has a government suspended fundamental liberties to protect the French language and culture," he said complacently.

By this time, the public knew some of the long-awaited details of the sign law. Specifying the new directives, an official of the Commission de Protection de la Langue Française had declared:

> French letters must be bigger than English letters.
>
> The space around the French letters must be larger than the space around the English letters.
>
> The French message must be placed to the left of the English one, or on top.
>
> The color of the French and English lettering should be the same. If it's not, the color of the French should be stronger. The language inspector will decide what color is stronger.
>
> If French and English are given equal prominence on any signs, then there must be twice as many French signs as English ones.

Then, on March 15th, Claude Ryan assumed Cabinet responsibility for the language portfolio as Minister Responsible for the French Language Charter. Ryan, the intellectual who had been the leader of the Liberal Party from 1978 through 1982, stumbling badly in the 1981 election, losing to the Parti Québécois, now confirmed that "for the foreseeable future" no bilingual signs would be allowed inside franchises and large stores. His position astonished English-speaking Quebecers, who recalled that in 1977, when Ryan was the publisher of *Le Devoir*, he had denigrated the proposed French Language Charter for "the rigid, dogmatic, possessive, and authoritarian manner with which it attempts to decree *the exclusive use of* French," and that a year later, speaking during a Montreal by-election, he had observed, "Once you have alienated your individual liberties in favor of so-called collective rights, they never come back, they never come back."

The unapologetic Ryan rationalized his about-face by saying he had come to realize that the management of linguistic rights did not involve fundamental rights. "It's not like free speech or freedom of religion," he told the *Gazette*. "That's sacred. Language rights are a function of concrete arrangements that will vary according to circumstances." In his opinion, commercial signs were merely advertising. "We regulate advertising in all sorts of ways. That's not a question of free speech. That's freedom of the dollar, and it's not my bag."

Soon Ryan was back with another announcement, in his role as Minister of Education, the other office that he still fills. Responding to a Supreme Court decision that the province, and not individual school boards, had the power to set curricula, he declared that he would now deny provincial grants to French schools that taught English as a second language before the fourth grade, because "we've long understood that premature exposure to English might not be compatible with the best development of the child." Happily, he was not bothered by a similar concern about the possible ill effects of premature French instruction in schools where an increasing number of English-speaking kids were beginning French immersion in kindergarten.

Quebec's strictures on education, so gratifying to nationalists, were beginning to annoy many French parents. As things stood, not only were their children denied instruction in English before the fourth grade, and then restricted to three hours' instruction a week, but they could not be *legally* transferred to an English-language school, in order to broaden their knowledge and enhance their future job opportunities; only parents who could afford to educate their children in other provinces could circumvent the law. An English-speaking businessman I know told me, "Years ago, if we placed an ad in the papers looking for a bilingual employee a good many of the applicants were Francophones. Now they are for the most part Anglophones, Italians, or Greeks. The young Francophones *are being forced to revert to* unilingualism, which will deny them most jobs, whether this province separates, drifts out to sea, or whatever."

The passion of Francophone Quebecers for the preservation of their language, which has evolved somewhat differently from the French spoken in France, the province having been separated from the motherland for more than three hundred years, has bequeathed us "hambourgeois" as the only acceptable alternative to "hamburger." The determination to purge

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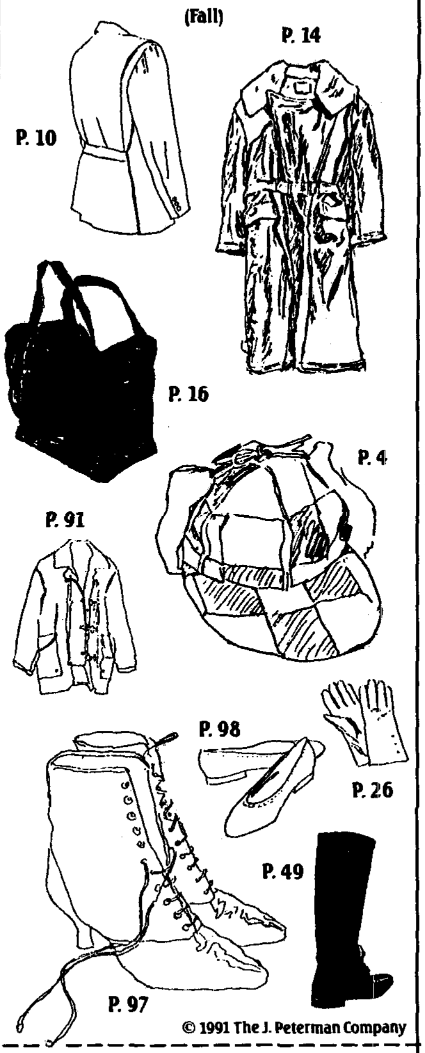

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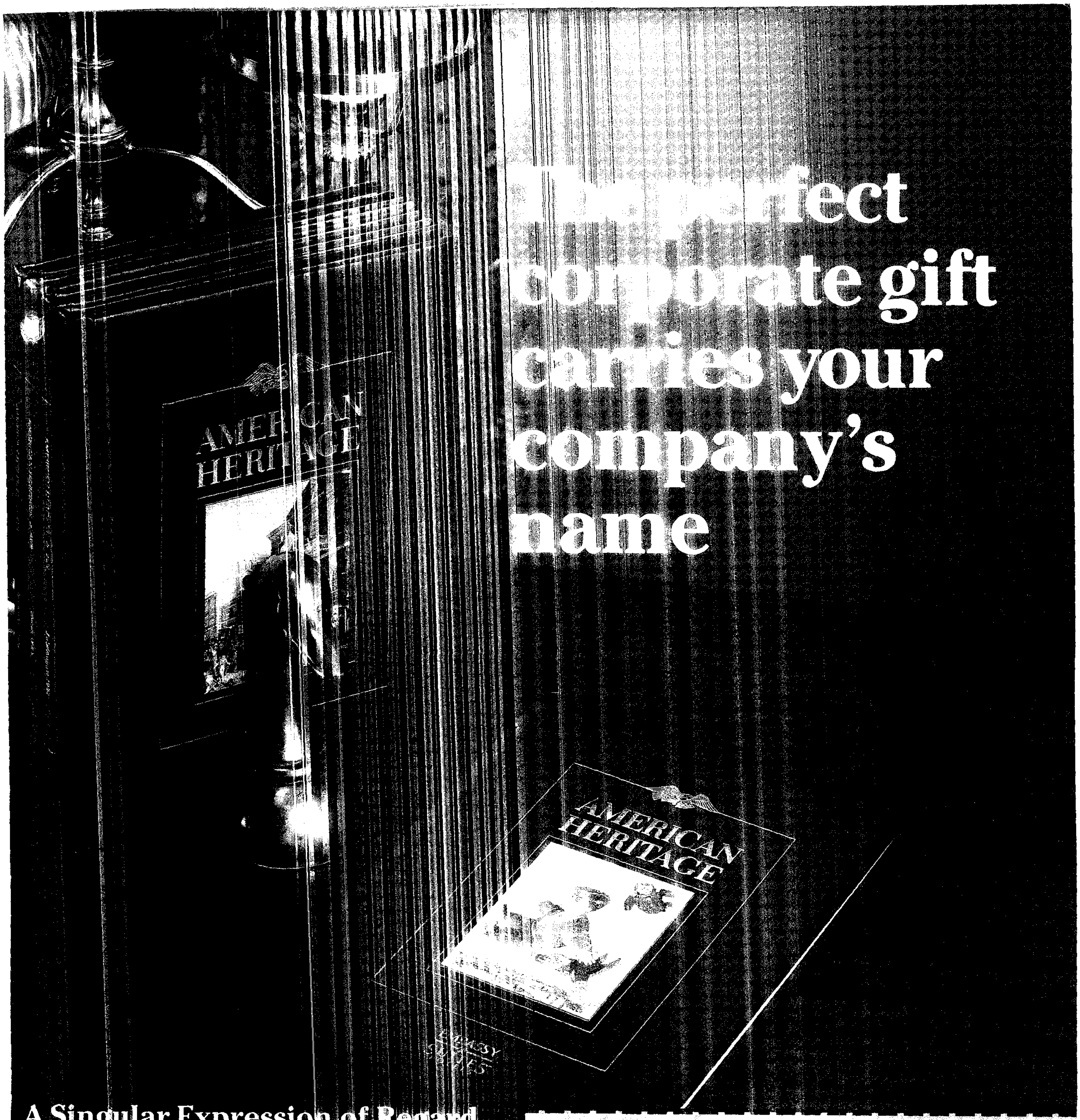
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*"O.K., who can put a price on love? Jim?"*

the language of intrusive Anglicisms has yielded several indigenous dictionaries, among them Dictionnaire des Difficultés de la Langue Française au Canada, by Gérard Dagenais, and La Dictionnaire des Petits Ignorances de la Langue Française au Canada, by Camille-H. Mailhot. Mailhot, a purist, objects to the designation *la bande* for any group of musicians. Instead, he argues, they should be called *un corps de musique*, *une harmonie*, or *une fanfare*.

Early in May, Claude Ryan delivered the latest refinement of Bill 178, introducing a sort of two-for-one rule on indoor bilingual signs; that is, French signs had to be twice as large or twice as numerous as English ones. His ruling, which would affect some seventy thousand Quebec businesses with four or fewer employees, had to be complied with by December of 1990. It was, Ryan insisted, the simplest possible application of the "markedly predominant" principle. Variations on the theme, he said, would be dealt with individually. If, for instance, a store's French signs were neon green and the English ones plain beige, but there weren't twice as many French signs as English ones, an inspector from the language commission would file a detailed report, and the commissioners would eventually decide whether the French signs had a "much greater impact." Ryan's interpretation of the law, which could involve bringing in color charts and the expert testimony of interior decorators, was, of course, immediately attacked both by Québécois language zealots and by outraged Anglophones.

At Woody's Pub, it was ordained that the law as it was set forth by Ryan did not go far enough, and the patrons formed something called the Twice As Much Society. Members of our society, it was decided, would lobby for an amendment to Bill 178 that would call for French to be spoken twice as loud as English, both inside *and* outside. Inspectors from the language commission would be armed with sound meters to detect Anglophones who spoke above a whisper, and could send offenders to the slammer. A Francophone hockey player scoring a goal for the Montreal Canadiens had to be cheered twice as loudly as a minority-group teammate. A member of the collectivity ordering a meal in a restaurant would have to be served a double portion. We also drafted a letter to Premier Bourassa demanding that his fertility payola be made available only to *québécois de vieille souche*, lest garlicky allophones, driven by avarice, take to polluting the province with racially impure families of a dozen kids or more.

PREMIER BOURASSA, riding high in the polls, called an election for September 25, 1989. Besides the Liberals and the Parti Québécois, twenty-seven other parties decided that they would contest the election, among them the New Democratic Party; the Marxist-Leninist Party; Parti Citron; Mouvement Socialiste; Parti Communiste du Québec; United Social Credit; Parti de Travailleurs du Québec; Parti Indépendantiste; Party for the Commonwealth of Canada; Parti Vert du Québec; and an Anglophone protest group, the Equality Party, which had been formed only a few months earlier. The Equality Party's star candidate, who would be running in the affluent, largely Anglophone suburb of Westmount, a Liberal fortress traditionally rewarded with a Cabinet seat, was a Woody's Pub stalwart—Richard Holden, Q.C. The ostensibly genial but often acerbic Holden, a long-standing Tory maverick and an old friend of Prime Minister Mulroney, had stood for election twice before, once as an independent in a provincial contest and then as a Tory in a federal election. The first time out, in 1962, he endeared himself to everybody by fainting during a press conference he'd called at the Windsor Hotel after being nominated. A headline in the next morning's *La Presse*, appearing over a photograph of Mrs. Holden fanning her supine husband on the carpet, ran: "IL DÉCLARE LA GUERRE À RENÉ LÉVESQUE: IL S'ÉVANOUIT" ("He declares war on René Lévesque: he swoons").

The irreverent Holden, much given to quixotic gestures, came to public notice again when, in the late seventies, he tilted his lance against that hundred-and-seven-year-old bastion of Wasp rectitude and financial clout the Sun Life Assurance Company. What happened is that on January 6, 1978, Sun Life announced that, because of the language laws, it would be shifting its head office to Toronto. To grasp what that meant, it is necessary to appreciate that a generation of English-speaking Montrealers—Richard Holden's and mine—was raised on the stirring boast that the massive Sun Life head office, in Dominion Square, was, by George, the biggest building in the whole bloody British Empire! Yes, indeed. But as far as Francophones were concerned it was actually a symbol of hateful Scottish Presbyterian arrogance. They had a point. Although a third of the company's business was done in Quebec, its investment in the province was negligible, and only two hundred of its two thousand Montreal employees and two of its twenty-one directors were Francophones. Holden, arguing that the company's use of policyholders' routine proxies to endorse the move of its head office was illegal, challenged the directors at a general meeting in Toronto. To nobody's surprise, he lost, but he did succeed in postponing the vote. Sadly, Sun Life's departure motivated many another business in Montreal to follow suit. Since 1976, it is estimated, fourteen thousand of Montreal's management jobs have been lost to Toronto.

Another 1989 Equality Party candidate was a brash seventy-five-year-old radio political commentator and former sportscaster, Gordon Atkinson. A decorated veteran of the Second World War and the Korean War, Atkinson was nominated in Montreal's Notre-Dame-de-Grâce constituency while he was on vacation in Europe. On his return, he fed already amused Francophone reporters by hailing his party's painfully naïve leader, Robert Libman, as "the Lech Walesa of Quebec today."

Libman, a twenty-eight-year-old architect, whose only previous community involvements had been as a coach of a Little League baseball team in Montreal and as a summer-camp counsellor in the Laurentians, told me when we had lunch together last year that he had become politicized after he had gradually realized that a lot of people he knew and half of his architecture class at McGill University, in Montreal, which graduated in 1985, had moved to Toronto, and that many of the others were thinking seriously about it. "I invited eight friends to a meeting in my office, but only three turned up," he said. "That was on March 21, 1988, and the next time we got together—after D'Iberville Fortier complained about the Anglophones' being humiliated—there were eight or nine of us. We found out that in order to be recognized as a political party we

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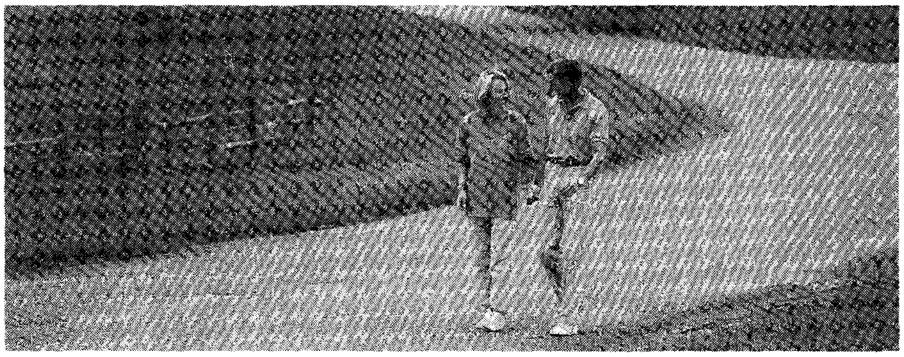

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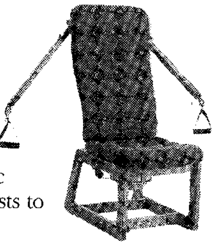

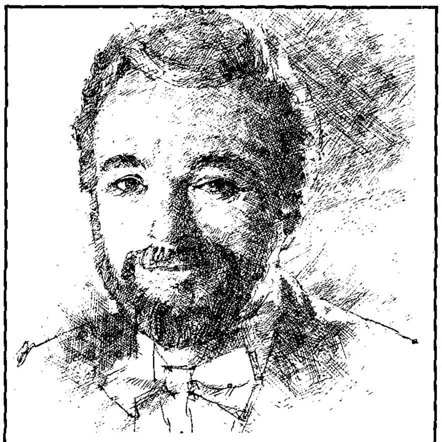

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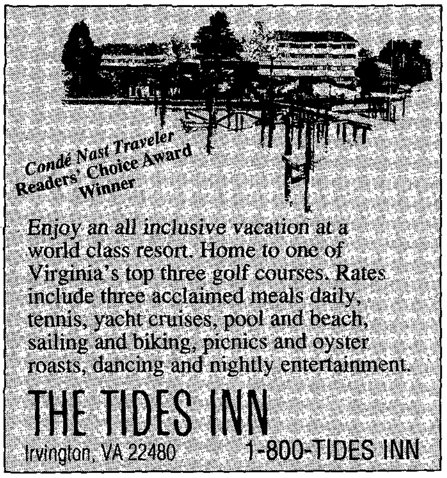

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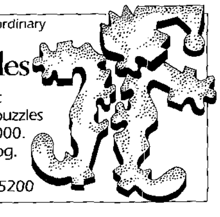

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needed sixty signatures from each of ten different constituencies, and early in December we started going door to door to collect them. Some people thought we were crazy. 'Good luck, buddy, but you'll never get anywhere.' Then the Supreme Court ruled, Bourassa invoked the notwithstanding clause and brought in Bill 178, and suddenly it was easier to get signatures. By this time, maybe forty or fifty people were coming to our meetings. Some of my friends wanted us to call ourselves the Freedom or Liberty Party, but I persuaded them to go with Equality. Three hundred people attended our first public meeting, late in March of 1989, and, with the necessary number of signatures in hand, we were officially accepted as a political party on April 7th. So I began to look for candidates. I had heard about Holden. Some people like him. Others told me he was a putz. We met, and he said no, he wouldn't consider running, and then he called me back and suggested we go out for lunch, and I knew I had him."

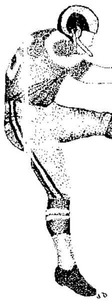
For all that, the Equality Party was still considered a non-starter—a bit of a prank—by the politically informed, but it was also an immediate embarrassment to the anxious pillars of a Jewish community. After all, Libman was a graduate of Herzliah High School, and almost all of the founding members of the Equality Party were also ostensibly nice Jewish boys. He had declared himself a candidate in the D'Arcy McGee district, which was just about eighty per cent Jewish, and one of whose former National Assembly members was Herbert Marx. (He is now a Superior Court Justice.) If Libman should be elected, what would the Francophones say? One alarmed Jewish-establishment heavy after another threw his support behind a compliant Liberal candidate, who hinted darkly that if the voters of D'Arcy McGee misbehaved, rocking the collectivity's boat, they would be putting government-pledged funds for Jewish public-health and cultural institutions at risk. Some members of the Jewish community were outraged by such blatant blackmail, but even more, remembering recent incidents in Outremont, were apprehensive.

BUS STOP
d. ehrenberg

Outremont, where many Francophone artists, intellectuals, and professionals are rooted, is a pretty Montreal suburb, rich in parks, tree-lined streets, elegant houses, and modish boutiques and cafés. In 1986, it discovered, to the chagrin of some of its residents, that its Chassidic community, once a negligible part of a population of twenty-three thousand, had grown to three thousand, with large families commonplace, even as they had been among the French Canadians themselves forty years earlier. The trouble surfaced when the Vishnizer Chassidim, one of a dozen sects extant in Montreal, asked for a routine change in a zoning law which would enable them to build a synagogue on a vacant lot on Saint-Viateur Street. The Outremont city council voted six to three against the request, the opposition being led by Gérard Pelletier, a onetime Front de Libération du Québec terrorist, who had served a seven-year jail sentence in 1972 for his role in an armed robbery. "We don't want Outremont to become a Chassidic city," he said. "This minority is not respecting by-laws."

In August of 1988, the monthly *Journal d'Outremont* published a letter by a TV personality complaining that the Chassidim were "disturbing, encroaching, bothersome." This led to a *La Presse* article entitled "Outremont Se Découvre un 'Problème Juif,' " in which the Chassidim were described as a "bizarre minority, with the men in black looking like bogeymen and the women and children dressed like onions." The article, noting the high fertility rate of a religious sect that, just like the Catholic Church, forbade birth control, went on to say, "Outremont is discovering its minority has had children." Spokesmen for the Canadian Jewish Congress and the B'nai B'rith's League for Human Rights issued a statement of protest. A week later, on Yom Kippur, *La Presse* responded with a two-page spread on the *problème juif*, including a column by Gérald LeBlanc that suggested that Anglophone Jews could do penance on their holy day by reading him in French. LeBlanc protested that he had nothing against Jews in general, only against those who were Anglophone. "Jews are often found in the higher reaches of English organizations like Alliance

Quebec and certain English media which did everything to make it difficult for Francophones to ensure the survival and promotion of French society in North America," he wrote, and then he repeated the familiar statement that Jews had long ago integrated into the province's Anglophone minority rather than its French majority. The standard Jewish response to this complaint was that Jews were not welcome in the French Catholic school system. That was certainly true, as far as it went, but it was also disingenuous; Jews would have identified with the English-speaking community in any event.



Most of the letters in *La Presse*, including one from Claude Ryan and one from the newspaper's very own Lysiane Gagnon, defended the Chassidim, but there was also a letter from a man who complained about what he called the self-imposed isolation of the Jews and asked, "Is there a single country in the world where the majority of the *native* [italics mine] population really likes the Jews?" An editorial writer for *La Presse* ventured that the reason Jews had protested the newspaper's original article was that they failed to understand French language or culture, for otherwise they would have recognized that "dressed like onions" was a colloquialism of the province's Lac Saint-Jean region which meant "bundled up to the neck." He ended by suggesting that possibly the only people who should be reading *La Presse* were "*québécois pure laine*," who at least understood the nuances of regional expressions.

Since then, Irving Abella, a professor of history at York University, in Toronto, and a co-author (with Harold Troper) of "None Is Too Many," a damning indictment of Canadian policy toward Jewish immigration during the Second World War, has made public a survey, undertaken in 1987 by York's Institute for Social Research, that measured anti-Semitic attitudes. Forty per cent of two thousand Canadians who responded to the survey, but eighty-four per cent of the Francophones who responded, believed that most Jews were pushy. Twenty-eight per cent of the total, but forty-two per cent of the Francophones, also thought that Jews were more willing than others to use shady practices to get ahead.

Montreal's Jewish community, a hundred and twenty thousand strong twenty years ago, and the largest and most vibrant in Canada, has diminished to ninety-five thousand today, and more than two-thirds of its members are over fifty years old. Actually, even more Montreal Jews than these statistics indicate have quit the city, but in the past thirty years the community has been replenished by the immigration of French-speaking Sephardic Jews from North Africa, and they now account for approximately a quarter of the city's Jewish population. The Anglophone Jews who have remained in Montreal feel that Premier Bourassa betrayed them with Bill 178, and they are wary of the tribalism that has taken hold here. René Lévesque was not an anti-Semite. Neither is Jacques Parizeau. All the same, Jews who have been Quebecers for generations understand only too well that when thousands of flag-waving nationalists march through the streets, roaring "*Le Québec au Québécois!*," they do not have in mind anybody named Ginsburg—or, for that matter, MacGregor.

The patron saint of the *indépendantistes*, l'Abbé Lionel Groulx, was born on a farm not far from Montreal in 1878, and was sent off to study for the priesthood at the age of thirteen. Five years later, he wrote in his diary that he was eager to do battle with Jews, Freemasons, "and the fanaticism of other races which cannot forgive us for remaining French." With this in mind, in 1901 he founded L'Action Catholique, a nationalist movement that evolved into the Association Canadienne de Jeunesse Catholique sixteen years later. Deeply influenced by the French Fascist writer Charles Maurras, who had already formed the L'Action Française party in France, Groulx started a newspaper of the same name in Quebec—already threatened by "cosmopolitan European immigration"—to advertise his conviction that race "determines the political, economic, social and intellectual life of a nation." In 1933, in defense of the purity of that race, Groulx's newspaper, now called *L'Action Nationale*, argued that it would be necessary to deny Jews full civil and political rights

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as well as cutting off their immigration from Germany. "Happy are peoples who have found dictators," he wrote a year later under a nom de plume, at a time when he had also become involved in the Achat Chez Nous movement. This movement, sponsored by church officials, advised its flock to avoid Jewish shopkeepers, who, according to *Le Devoir*, had "cheating and corruption in their bloodstream."

Bigoted clerics were not uncommon during Groulx's halcyon days, which I take to be the thirties, a decade when that notoriously anti-Semitic radio priest Father Charles Coughlin flourished in the United States. What is astonishing is that, given the nature of the racist claptrap that was Groulx's stock-in-trade, he did not fade away like Coughlin, a blight limited to his times, but went on to become a major influence on many of Quebec's leading intellectuals, among them Claude Ryan. After the eighty-nine-year-old abbé died, in 1967, Ryan wrote, "He was . . . the spiritual father of modern Quebec. Everything noteworthy, everything novel on the Quebec scene has carried the imprint of Groulx's thought."

STUDYING the detailed results in the *Gazette* on September 26, 1989, I was pleased to see that the Jews of Montreal's D'Arcy McGee district had not been intimidated. They had elected the far from charismatic Robert Libman to the traditional Liberal seat with a stunning majority of sixty-six hundred votes out of twenty-six thousand six hundred and forty-eight cast. Even more surprising, a hundred and twenty-six thousand Montrealers, voting in nineteen districts, supported the Equality Party, electing three more of its candidates, and five others were runners-up. The Four Equals, as they were inevitably dubbed, were Libman; Gordon Atkinson, who was an honorary lieutenant-colonel of the 78th Fraser Highlanders, wearing a kilt and preceded into his victory celebration by a bagpiper; Richard Holden, who squeaked through in Westmount with a plurality of five hundred and eight votes out of twenty-one thousand six hundred and eleven cast; and Neil Cameron, a history teacher at a junior college. Neither Atkinson, resident in Quebec for thirty years, nor Cameron, a Westerner, spoke adequate French. Holden had studied for a year at the University of Grenoble and was fluently bilingual. So was Libman, who was married to a Moroccan-born woman.

Libman, suddenly thrust into the limelight, was all too obviously nourished by it. "I've always wanted to be a rich and famous architect-developer," he told the *Gazette*. "It's the wheeling and dealing and the signs of success—the need to show you've been successful is very important to me."

Bourassa's Liberal government had been returned to power with ninety-two seats out of a hundred and twenty-five, but the big election story was the unexpected rise of the Equality Party. "If we can do this in five months, imagine what we can do in four years," Libman said.

On second glance, observers noted that the Parti Québécois, adjudged comatose only eighteen months earlier and weighing in with a hard line on independence this time out, had taken twenty-nine seats, ten more than it held when the legislature was dissolved, and had won forty per cent of the popular vote, slightly more than it had managed to get in 1985. The Party leader, Jacques Parizeau, though he had given up his seat in 1984 and later walked out on the Parti Québécois, had been returned to the National Assembly by his old district of l'Assomption. Bolstered by a poll taken only a week before the election, which showed that twenty-nine per cent of Quebecers were for outright sovereignty, a gain of fourteen points since 1985, he said, "This idea of sovereignty, they said it was dead. It's alive."

So, one learned as time went on, was anti-Semitism. In April of 1990, Pierre Péladeau, the bumptious publisher of the tabloid *Journal de Montréal* and a regular on TV talk shows, who had become something of a folk hero in Quebec, was accused by an interviewer from the magazine *L'Actualité* of rebuking his newspaper's staff when it ran articles praising Jews. The magazine quoted him as responding, "I have a lot of respect for Jews, but they take up too much space. I want to help our people first, who need it a lot more."

Péladeau claimed to be the victim of a smear job. "I've never reproached the *Journal* for devoting an article to a Jew because he was a Jew, but because he was not a Francophone," he said. He later remarked that he had written a memo to his staff, when the

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The bustle of a Hong Kong street (above) contrasts with timeless scenes (right, from the top): in India, Rajasthan women carrying urns and a Udaipur family with their painted pets; a Malaysian woman working a rice paddy; a traditional dance in Kyoto, Japan; and a girl selling bananas at a floating market in Thailand

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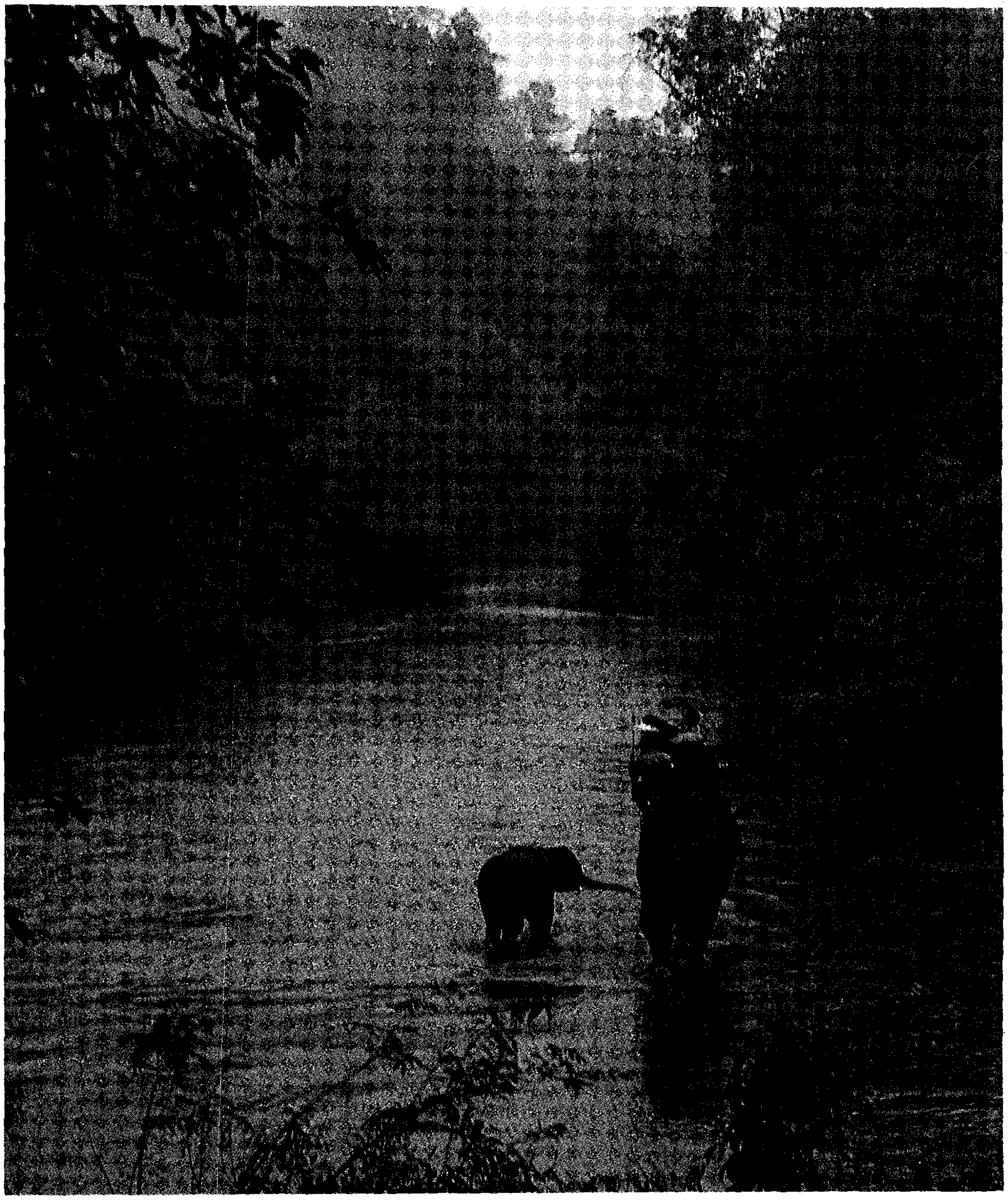

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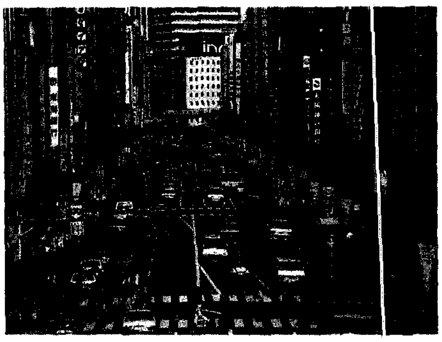


Julie Hauck

*The region offers a diversity of peoples and places*

Ben Nakayama

Top to bottom: The Chiang Kai-shek Memorial in Taiwan, an overview of Tokyo's world-famous Ginza, and the pristine Coral Reef Beach of Cebu Island, the Philippines

**JAPAN** Rush-hour trains, Disneyland and Big Bird, hot dogs, late-night jazz . . . this is Japan. A high-tech powerhouse with a modern life-style. A centuries-old civilization where a greeting, a flower arrangement, or a business meeting reflects cultural traditions that challenge the very notion of a "Westernized" Asia.

There's always something new—the Osaka Aquarium, for instance—as well as the familiar: the wonderland of hot springs on Kyushu, ice floes off Hokkaido, farming villages on Shikoku, Kyoto's temples, Hiroshima's monuments, Kanazawa's gardens, the bustle of downtown Tokyo. And what originated in the West—rock discos or jazz clubs—Japanese ambience makes unique.

**HONG KONG** Long renowned as an urban business center of high-rise buildings and crowded city streets, a duty-free shopper's paradise with some of the finest hotels and restaurants in the world, it's surprising to find that only twenty per cent of Hong Kong is urban. In addition to the pleasures of a modern Asian metropolis, Hong Kong offers tours through rural farmland, fishing villages, walled towns, and isolated beaches in the New Territories, and on Hong Kong's outlying islands, hiking, beach resorts, and rural monasteries can be found.

The heart of urban Hong Kong isn't lacking green places in which to escape the hustle of downtown. Residents practice *t'ai chi* in the city parks in early morning. The Botanical and Zoological Gardens in Hong Kong Island's Central District, spectacular views from Victoria Peak (and from the Peak Tram, a funicular railway), and marvelous sunsets in Victoria Park should not be missed.

**TAIWAN** The Beautiful Island is a study in contrasts—firmly grounded in traditional Chinese culture, it has a powerhouse high-tech economy; a showcase of modern Chinese art and architecture, it's a place where, at dawn, the population pours into city parks to perform traditional Chinese exercises.

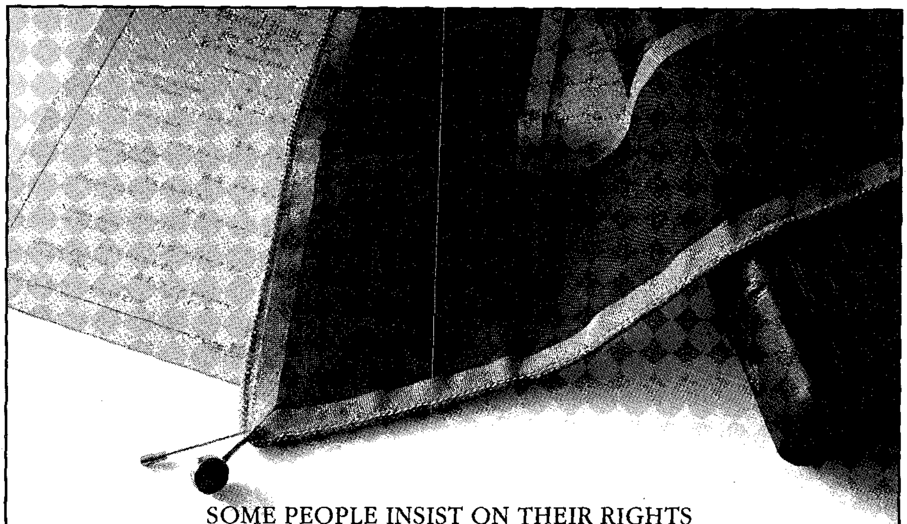
To visit Taiwan is to see modern Chinese culture, with its opera, museums, arts centers, and traditional and modern music and dance. It also offers an outstanding opportunity for climbing, hiking, skiing, and diving. Two-thirds of the island is crossed by mountains (Hsin-kao is Taiwan's highest peak) which on the east coast drop dramatically to the sea. The blue coastal waters are home to large colonies of live coral and tropical fish and vegetation.

**THAILAND** In recent years, Thailand has experienced the second-largest growth of tourism in the world, and with good reason—this is a country with something for everyone. Ancient monuments and modern cities, mountain treks and tropical islands, cultural displays, elephant rides—all are available and accessible in this exotic kingdom. Sukhothai is where the Golden Age of Thai Arts flourished through the thirteenth century; in the northeast are ancient Khmer monuments and Ban Chieng, site of the world's first Bronze Age civilization.

Anyone who enjoys life on the water can base a visit in Kanchanaburi. Three hours west of Bangkok, you can stay in a floating hotel, dine at raft restaurants, and shop in the floating market. For a beach holiday away from it all, the southern peninsular beaches and tropical island resorts offer white sand, secluded coves, water sports, and tranquil hideaways. And no matter how you approach a Thai vacation, you will love the food.

**THE PHILIPPINES** This paradise of over seven thousand islands ranges from the large island of Luzon, with the capital city of Manila, to isolated sun-drenched specks in the sea. With flowing rice fields, virgin rain forest, volcanic peaks, and the most beautiful beaches in Asia, this is a spectacular landscape.

The sights of Manila and a taste of its nightlife—Filipino musicians are considered the best in Asia—are a must on any itinerary. But the premier attraction of the Philippines is the beaches. The resorts in the Visayan island group south of Luzon are set on white-sand beaches backed by dramatic peaks and green coconut plantations, and many of the island



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towns are built in the lovely Spanish colonial style. But Filipino customs are grounded in older traditions that are often surprisingly different from Western values.

**INDONESIA** To the people of Bali, life and art are one, woven together. In such a place, welcoming visitors itself becomes an art form. Java, Indonesia's principal island, contains the capital city of Jakarta and the country's best-preserved monuments and historical sites. Jogjakarta is the cultural center—a city of museums, music, and dance, where you find the best batik and can enjoy the many forms of puppetry and shadow play.

On Bali, the villages each specialize in a different art form: stonecarving, silver filigree work, wind chimes, dance, woodcarving. Sulawesi is home to Indonesia's greatest diversity of societies. Sumatra is renowned for its wildlife preserves and Lake Toba, one of the world's largest crater lakes, famed for its pine-covered beaches.

Gary Brettnacher

Hard work is part of the picture in Bali

**SINGAPORE** While the Zoological Gardens, Mandai Orchid Gardens, and Bukit Timah Nature Reserve in the center of the island have earned Singapore the title of Garden Isle, the city is its heart. In the past, renewal and new construction tended toward homogeneous modern developments, but in recent years Singapore embarked on a program of neighborhood restoration, preserving the ethnic character of its districts. Much of Chinatown, for instance, was scheduled for demolition but has been saved by an ambitious preservation plan: Over a hundred shops will be restored when the project is completed.

The streets of Little India, populated by groups as varied as India itself, have been extensively redeveloped, but it has not lost its identity. And the Malay enclave of the Arab

District, smallest of the ethnic districts, reflects the Muslim traditions of its inhabitants.

Ben Edwards

ncient a [illegible] ai

**MALAYSIA** The combination of mainland peninsular Malaysia's many attractions—island beaches, hilltop resorts, preserved national parkland, historic precolonial cities—and the vast tropical wilderness of the states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo insure that Malaysia will remain an attractive, exotic destination.

Malaysia's progressive heritage can be seen best in its capital city of Kuala Lumpur. The heart of the colonial "old city"—grand, Moorish-style colonial buildings, beautifully preserved and often now put to new uses as museums and cultural centers—lies near the joining point of two rivers. Further east is the Golden Triangle of modern buildings, the business, hotel, shopping, [illegible] residential area. Still further east, [illegible] will bring a new Golden Crescent—including a vast park, lake, and botanic gardens—that is still in early planning stages.

**INDIA** India is immense and its cultural wealth is almost unfathomable. Its geography varies from the Himalayan heights of the north to the great flat plain of the south. Its peoples practice every religion the world has known. A sophisticated modern country, it encompasses primitive tribes and the spectrum that lies between. Its cuisines are as varied as its peoples. India can not be known in a single trip. It requires smaller bites.

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**Carol-June Cassidy is a writer and editor based in New York City.**

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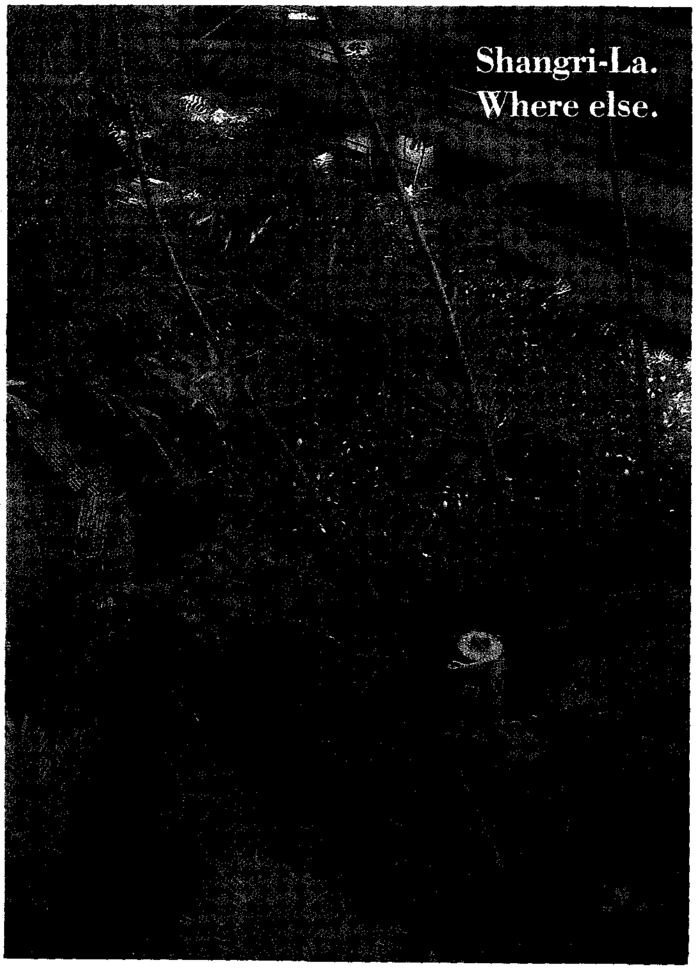

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newspaper launched a fashion section, that said, as he recalled, "In the city here—the city in which *Journal de Montréal* runs—there is no doubt that the fashion business is controlled by the Jewish people, English-speaking. It so happens that they are Jewish, but they speak English. If they were to speak French, it would be a different story."

Péladeau insisted that he had done nothing wrong and had no intention of apologizing, and the next day, when he repeated on a popular radio show his remark about the Jews' taking up too much space, most of the call-in public supported him warmly. But an association representing fifty journalists and photographers at the *Journal* issued a statement: "The association condemns such chauvinistic declarations and considers the pluralism that runs through the whole of Quebec society must be accepted."

Péladeau, one of Quebec's highly touted new entrepreneurs, is the founding president and controlling shareholder of Quebecor, whose annual revenue in 1990 was two billion four hundred million dollars. A Quebecor division publishes not only the trashy *Journal* but also three other dailies, one in Quebec City, one in Sherbrooke, Quebec, and one in Winnipeg, as well as forty-one weeklies and thirteen magazines, among them a number of supermarket tabloids: *Nouvelles et Potins*, *Journal des Vedettes*, and *Le Nouveau Samedi*. Privately, however, he professes to read Balzac, Dostoyevski, and Plato, and to consider Beethoven "the most important man ever on earth." A child of penury, he cherishes his image as a *p'tit Québécois* who has risen to become a member of the exclusive Club Saint-Denis and a fund-raiser for the Orchestre Métropolitain du Grand Montréal. He is a short, owlish-looking man with a receding chin. A much-advertised former alcoholic and boastful womanizer ("I've had all the women I wanted, when I wanted them," he once told a Toronto *Globe & Mail* reporter), he has been born again as a believer, and expects one day to be led into Heaven to the strains of the choral movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. While he waits, Péladeau drives to his office every weekday from his ten-acre estate in the Laurentians, favoring a Rolls-Royce in summer and a Mercedes in winter. He has explained his newfound faith by saying, "I needed spirituality."

Responding to Péladeau's interview in *L'Actualité*, the president of Crazy Ted Cellular, an electronics store, threatened to withdraw two hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of annual advertising from the *Journal* unless the publisher apologized. Pepe Clothing Canada cancelled its advertising in *Clin d'Oeil*, a fashion magazine owned by Quebecor, and urged other Jewish businesses to follow suit. Then Lysiane Gagnon, writing in *La Presse*, revealed that Péladeau was to be awarded an honorary degree by the Université de Montréal, and she asserted that his "xenophobic nationalism . . . recalls the Quebec of the thirties, when our fascist-leaning élites denounced the supposed omnipresence of the Jews in the economy in absolutely similar terms and in the name of the same sort of nationalism." Next, a union representing three thousand teaching assistants and lecturers at the Université de Montréal protested, and the publisher's name was dropped from the awards list. Finally, Péladeau, obviously brooding over advertising accounts at risk, delivered a mealy-mouthed apology, which was quickly accepted by Crazy Ted, Pepe Clothing Canada, and other defectors.

It was in this climate that I finally caught up with Morton Brownstein, who had taken his case against the sign law (Section 58 of Bill 101) all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. I met Brownstein, the president and C.E.O. of Browns Shoe Shops, in his office in the Montreal suburb of Ville Saint-Laurent. The company, founded by his father, is a retail chain with twenty-three stores across Canada, fourteen of them in Quebec. For all his objections to the sign law, Brownstein did not fit the Québécois stereotype of the arrogant "Westmount Rhodesian," determined to keep the French in their place as *les nègres blancs d'Amérique*. On the contrary, he was convinced that the Anglophones stood their best chance of having their rights restored within a Quebec whose language, culture, and traditions were respected by the rest of Canada.

Morton Brownstein is fluently bi-

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lingual, and so are his children: one of them lived in France for three years, and another has a master's degree in French from McGill. He was, it turned out, so supportive of "the French Fact" that he was in favor of requiring English-speaking students to write their McGill entrance exams in French. He also welcomed the new Francophone entrepreneurs, who, he said, had taken the province's economic reins into their own hands at last. "There's been a dramatic change here," he said. "Ten, twelve years ago Francophone businessmen dreaded the thought of sovereignty-association, but now most of them have moved over to the separatist side." He went on to say that he had the greatest respect for the Parti Québécois leaders, whom he took to be refreshingly honest.

What, then, I asked, was his problem?

"The sign law. They trampled on my rights. I do not feel that in order to establish the supremacy of French here it was necessary to deny Anglophones their individual rights."

Brownstein, a past president of Montreal's Jewish General Hospital, lamented the fact that many English-speaking doctors and nurses had pulled out of Quebec over the past fifteen years. "Lots of my friends have left, too," he said. "And the young graduate from McGill and are almost totally going, gone."

A week later, I went to lunch with Ludmila de Fougerolles, the head of the Commission de Protection de la Langue Française. Expecting a linguistic Mme. Defarge, the fearsome overseer of the province's dreaded tongue-troopers, I found myself in the company of a cultivated lady who was far from doctrinaire. She told me that in 1949, when she was six years old, her family, led by her father, had walked out of Czechoslovakia, crossing the border illegally by night. After three years in France, they emigrated to Quebec. A graduate of McGill Law School, she had been appointed to her seventy-five-thousand-dollar-a-year job in 1987. She said that her language cops had investigated thirty-six hundred and eleven alleged infractions of Bill 101 in the year ending March 31, 1990, as opposed to a mere twelve hundred and seventy-five in the year ending March 31, 1986. Mme. de Fougerolles also had to cope with a deluge of complaints from self-appointed vigilantes, like the middle-aged man with the camera whom I had encountered outside Woody's Pub. A hard core of these vigilantes, some two hundred strong, had accounted for roughly ten thousand complaints against seventeen hundred and seventy-four commercial establishments in 1988.

As a so-called allophone filling a controversial office, Mme. de Fougerolles now runs into flak from Québécois underlings who feel that she is not sufficiently severe and from English-speaking friends who accuse her of serving the enemy—of being a *vendue*. Her inspectors, she told me, far from being zealots, apply the law with a soupçon of tolerance. There was, for instance, the celebrated case of a woman who runs the Westmount Bead Emporium and who had been hounded for years because she displayed bilingual signs. Finally, a perspicacious inspector discovered that the woman gave English-language courses in batik and the history of beads. He ruled that the emporium was in fact a cultural institution and, as such, was exempt from the sign law. She was pestered no more.

I asked Mme. de Fougerolles whether the commission's inspectors, in imposing an unpopular law on shopkeepers, ever met with a violent reception—say, a baseball bat.

"As a matter of fact," she said, "they run into more abuse from Francophones—say, a motel owner or the proprietor of a souvenir shop, both dependent on the tourist trade—than they do from Anglophones."

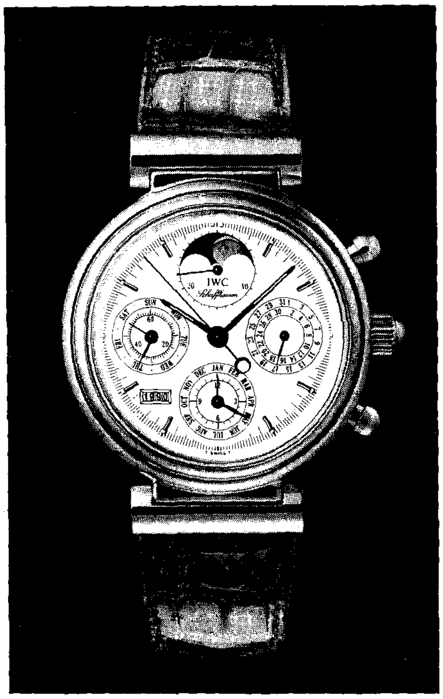
IN May of 1990, the Parti Québécois published a long-awaited manifesto, "La Souveraineté: Pourquoi? Comment?" It said, "We must break the iron collar of a federal system which serves us badly, which will always subordinate our national interests to those of another majority." As had been expected, the pamphlet fudged the hard questions, but it did set out some of the Party's plans for independence, which was to be negotiated, it said, "properly and intelligently." There would be a free circulation of people and goods between the new republic and English Canada, something a new republic of Quebec could seek but not guarantee.

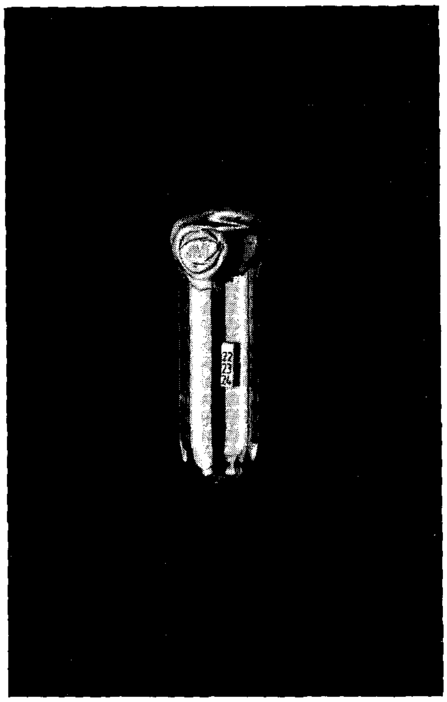
The Parti Québécois's policy pamphlet stated that all Quebec civil servants working for the federal government would automatically be hired by the Quebec government to run its embassies and manage its postal service, training, and other programs now under federal jurisdiction. But officials of the Public Service Alliance of Canada, thirty-five thousand of whose membership, of a hundred and seventy thousand, were Québécois, were understandably skeptical. P.S.A.C. leaders doubted whether the already notoriously bloated Quebec civil service could absorb so many new employees.

As its first step, the Parti Québécois declared, a newly independent Quebec would go to the international court in The Hague to claim the entire immense territory of Labrador. Labrador was united with Newfoundland in 1763 and, following a dispute over fishing grounds, was placed under Quebec's jurisdiction in 1774, only to be shuffled off into Newfoundland's care again in 1809. Then, in 1825, each claimant was awarded a chunk of the pie, the territory west of Blanc Sablon north to 52 degrees going to Quebec and known for a time as either Côte-du-nord or Quebec-Labrador. Its borders were still in dispute in 1907, and the problem was sent to the British Privy Council, which, in 1927, awarded Newfoundland the vast area drained by rivers flowing into the Atlantic.

"If Canada is divisible," Pierre Trudeau once said, "Quebec should be divisible, too."

William F. Shaw and Lionel Albert, in their cogently argued 1980 book, "Partition: The Price of Quebec's Independence," maintain that an independent Quebec should be limited to the territory of New France—the land settled by the French before the conquest in 1759. It follows that the entire area of Quebec North, which was awarded to Quebec as a province (in two parts, one in 1898 and the other in 1912), and not as an independent country, would revert to Canada. The Outaouais (the region of municipalities, including Hull, that are in Quebec but contiguous with Ottawa), western Quebec, the Eastern Townships, and the Gaspé would remain Canadian, because the United Empire Loyalists got there first or because the majority who live there would be against independence. These regions would be knit together to form a loyal new province, Quebec West, with a population of well over a million—more than the population of Nova Scotia,





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Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, or, of course, Prince Edward Island.

Before absorbing Labrador, Quebec would be obliged to get Canada to agree to submit the case to the international court in The Hague, and then it would have to consult the natives of the territory, the majority of whom would most likely opt to remain in Canada. Never mind. Blithely taking the acquisition of Labrador for granted, the Parti Québécois pamphlet declared that the new, expanded Quebec would be the eighteenth-largest country in the world geographically and, given its six and a half million citizens, eightieth in population. Its gross domestic product, of a hundred and forty-four billion dollars, would be roughly equivalent to that of Austria, and thus would endow it with the world's sixteenth-largest economy—provided, of course, that it maintained its enormous trade, amounting to fifty-five per cent of its total exports, with a just possibly fulminating English Canada, and remained a part of an unrevised free-trade deal with the United States, another open question.

Quebec, according to the Parti Québécois pamphlet, would hold on to the dollar, maintaining a monetary union with Canada for the benefit of both countries. This proposal, of course, doesn't take the likely ill will of English Canada into account, and does not explain how Quebec could be truly sovereign if its bank rate were to be set in another country. In fact, that arrangement would immediately make the brand-new state of Quebec unique, establishing it as the only industrialized nation in the world to have another state control its monetary policy. Like Liberia and Panama, both of which use the American dollar, the new country would have no say in determining the value of its currency or in setting interest rates. Come to think of it, since Quebec now does have some influence on the shape of the Bank of Canada's policies, it would by choosing independence in name become more dependent in fact than ever before. In any event, Quebec's independence would be protected by a small conventional army, and it would immediately apply for a seat in the United Nations.

The Parti Québécois's case was lent credibility when the New York *Times* pronounced Quebec's economy strong enough to allow it to separate and become a nation "three times the area of France." The analogy is preposterous, since France is verdant from shore to shore, while most of Quebec's territory—ninety-five per cent, say—cannot be cultivated and is unlikely ever to be more than sparsely settled. In support of its view, the *Times* quoted John Kenneth Galbraith, himself Ontario-born and educated, as saying, "The economic viability of Quebec is no longer in doubt." However, Galbraith had added, "But this is not the issue. The political and cultural loss to the Canadians would be irretrievable."

Woody's Pub used to be frequented late in the afternoon by a number of local lawyers, journalists, and politicians, among them Richard Holden, now a Member of the National Assembly, and the ebullient Nick Auf der Maur, gadfly city councillor, *Gazette* columnist, and boulevardier. Last summer, more often than not, Auf der Maur, expounding with gusto on our tribal troubles, was attended at the bar by reporters out of New York, Washington, or London, with notebooks at the ready. Like many other English-speaking but fluently bilingual Montrealers, he was increasingly concerned about our situation here, yet he also relished it. Attention was being paid at last.

I should point out that Canadians travelling in Europe, or even in the neighboring United States, have long been reconciled to finding no word of home in the newspapers, save for last night's baseball or hockey scores. In the summer of 1990, however, there was a change: once benign, law-abiding Canada was born again, as front-page stuff, one of the world's most unnecessary and goofy trouble spots, with Montreal, my Montreal, the very eye of the storm.

Montrealers reading about their plight in Canadian newspapers or magazines—say, the Toronto *Globe & Mail*, *Maclean's*, *Le Devoir*, *La Presse*, *L'Actualité*, or *Saturday Night*—tend to dismiss doomsday scenarios as the mischief of indigenous hacks: made in Canada and therefore minor league, of no consequence. But a report run in the *Wall Street Journal*, the New York *Times*, the London *Daily Telegraph*, or *The Economist* predicting the breakup of our nation inevitably reverberates in our own press the next day and commands serious attention in Canada—even an overreaction. In July of 1989, for instance, the *Times* printed a couple of articles about resurgent Quebec nationalism. In one article, it suggested that Premier Bourassa, invoking the constitution's notwithstanding clause to override a Supreme Court ruling and amend an already restrictive language law, had taken advantage of a "constitutional loophole." This struck me as fair comment, but it enraged many a Québécois politician and editorial writer. The same article made reference to, but did not quote in

## BACK

We try a new drug, a new combination
of drugs, and suddenly
I fall into my life again

like a vole picked up by a storm
then dropped three valleys
and two mountains away from home.

I can find my way back. I know
I will recognize the store
where I used to buy milk and gas.

I remember the house and barn,
the rake, the blue cups and plates,
the Russian novels I loved so much,

and the black silk nightgown
that he once thrust
into the toe of my Christmas stocking.

—Jane Kenyon

• •

full, a statement that Witold Rybczynski had originally made in *Liberté*, a Québécois intellectual journal. What the McGill professor and the author of "Home," "The Most Beautiful House in the World," and "Waiting for the Weekend" actually said was, "The once cosmopolitan city of Montreal is in danger of becoming a linguistic Beirut. Sensibilities have become dulled to the point where the presence or absence of an apostrophe or an *accent aigu* is a political statement, and spray paint has replaced civilized discourse. Comparisons with historic examples of intolerance are exaggerated, but it is true that public policy seems to be made as much by vandals as by elected politicians. It is a sorry spectacle, and one which the rest of the world views with incomprehension."

The Quebec delegation in New York lodged an immediate protest with the *Times*. Premier Bourassa declared that the *Times* coverage was "so contrary to the real situation it will not have any serious consequences." Jacques Parizeau reminded reporters that when the Parti Québécois first came to power, in 1976, the media in the United States had suggested that Quebec would become "the Cuba of the North," and he went on to say, "If some of these U.S. newspapers are now trying again to describe us in such a way that would be called politically damaging for us, it's probably that we are stronger than we think."

All this was small beer compared with the real shock that reverberated through Quebec in the summer of 1990. On June 22nd, the Meech Lake accord collapsed; the accord was a constitutional compromise that, Premier Bourassa says, would have yielded Quebec its absolute minimum demands, enabling it to sign the Constitution Act of 1982. Benumbed by three years of repetitive, cliffhanging constitutional negotiations, by endless op-ed pieces pro and con in the newspapers, by urgent television specials started up with doomsday music, by speeches warning us of the national apocalypse to come, and by contradictory polls from Gallup, Centre de Recherche sur l'Opinion Publique (CROP), Angus Reid/Southam, *Globe*-CBC, Decima, SORECOM, Inc., and the rest, which seemed to test the pulse at least once a month, punch-drunk Canadians wakened to big black banner headlines on Saturday, June 23rd. The one in the *Gazette* was "MEECH IS DEAD." In a brief statement to the National Assembly, Premier Bourassa expressed "profound disappointment" that the Meech Lake accord had not been ratified, and concluded by reminding English Canada that "Quebec is today and forever a distinct society capable of insuring its own development and destiny."

"Meech is dead," an exultant Jacques Parizeau proclaimed in the National Assembly. "Long live a sovereign Quebec, and quickly."

There was a pleasing symmetry in that what had begun as a wasting tribal quarrel between Canada's two so-called founding races finally came unstuck through the efforts of a descendant of Canada's original peoples—Elijah Harper, a previously unknown aboriginal member of Manitoba's Legislative Assembly—even as other Indians beat drums outside the building.

If the Meech Lake accord was to become law, it had to be ratified by Canada's ten provincial legislatures before midnight, June 23rd. The Manitoba legislature required unanimous consent in order to extend its June 22nd debate on the accord past noon so that members could vote on it. At 12:26 P.M., June 22nd, Elijah Harper, a former Ojibwa-Cree chief, who was the member for Rupertsland, was asked if he would acquiesce in unanimous consent. "No, Mr. Speaker," he replied. Moments later, the legislature was adjourned for the weekend, and that was that.

Canada's natives had objected to the accord because it failed to acknowledge that they, like the Québécois, made up "a distinct society" and a fundamental characteristic of Canada. Harper, waving a sacred eagle feather, addressed several hundred supporters outside the legislature. "Now the Canadian people know our concerns about the national disgrace of this country's treatment of its aboriginal people," he said.

The next morning's *Gazette*, surely unaware that it was echoing the slogan of the Jewish Defense League, featured this front-page banner headline:

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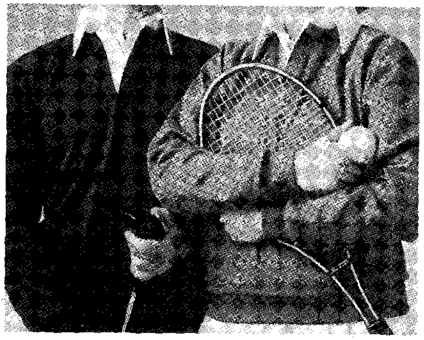

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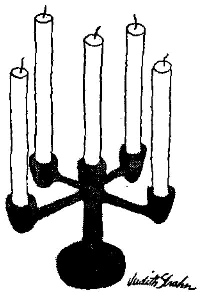
constitutional reforms with the other provinces. "Do not ask me now to go back to the bargaining table," he said. "Dignity will prevent me from doing that." Then he said, referring to Prime Minister Trudeau, his old nemesis, "Do not forget that the source of the problem is the fact that in 1981 the Premier of Quebec was put aside by the federal government."

Certainly on November 5, 1981, an isolated and infuriated Réne Lévesque, who was then Premier of Quebec, had refused to sign an agreement on patriating the British North America Act. And thereafter, as far as the nationalists were concerned, Quebec had been humiliated at the conferences—excluded from the Canadian family, the victim yet again of an Anglophone conspiracy. But in "A Deal Undone: The Making and Breaking of the Meech Lake Accord" Andrew Cohen pointed out, "The fact is that the 'injustice' was undertaken by a Liberal government with overwhelming representation in Quebec. The prime minister was a Quebecker who had been elected with large majorities from his native province since 1968. A third of his cabinet was from Quebec, including senior ministers in finance, health, and justice. Moreover, the Liberals had elected seventy-four of seventy-five MPs from Quebec, seventy-one of whom supported the package. A good many provincial Liberals supported it, too. If this was humiliation, it was at the hands of les Québécois."



Three years later, Trudeau retired, and on September 4, 1984, the Conservatives, led by Brian Mulroney, won the federal election. Bourassa was back in office in Quebec before 1985 was out, and on May 9, 1986, at yet another conference on the future of Quebec and Canada, Gil Rémillard, Quebec's Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, presented the province's five conditions for rejoining the family. The first condition, ostensibly innocuous, even oddly touching, that Quebec be officially proclaimed a "distinct society," turned out to be the most contentious. "We must be assured that the Canadian constitution will explicitly *recognize the unique character* of Quebec society and guarantee us the means necessary to insure its full development within the framework of Canadian federalism," Rémillard said. Quebec also wanted a veto over any future constitutional amendments; a limitation put on federal spending powers, allowing the province to "opt out" of federal programs with financial compensation; sole control over immigration into its territory; and its traditional right to fill three of the nine Supreme Court appointments guaranteed *in the* constitution.

The following spring, Canada's ten provincial premiers met with Prime Minister Mulroney at Meech Lake, in Gatineau Park, only a twenty-minute drive from downtown Ottawa, and agreed to an amending formula: Quebec would be recognized as a distinct society within Canada, its legislature entitled "to preserve and promote the distinct society of Quebec" even while it acknowledged that Anglophones were a fundamental characteristic of that society. This formula was interpreted by most of the premiers as window dressing, a sop to the insecure, but Premier Bourassa later told the National Assembly, "As a result, *in the* exercise of our legislative jurisdictions, we will be able to . . . gain new ground [in our] cultural, and our political, legal, and economic institutions." The ten premiers also agreed that each Canadian province would now have a role in choosing its senators, whereas in the past they were appointed by the Prime Minister. Appointment to the Canadian Senate, I should point out, is a traditional patronage plum.

Quebec, with roughly a quarter of the country's population, annually attracted only about sixteen per cent of Canada's immigrants. Now it would be entitled to a percentage of newcomers equal to its population percentage plus five per cent, every year. That was nice, very nice, but also baffling, if only because immigrants would not need to linger in the province for more than a week. In fact, it soon emerged that rich immigrants from Hong Kong and Korea, who had been welcomed with special visas when they pledged to invest or start businesses in the province, were using Quebec as a jumping-off point, and actually ended up in Toronto or Vancouver, where they could educate their children in the language of their choice. The accord did guarantee Quebec the right to three Supreme Court Justices. It would also allow provinces to opt out of federal programs with financial compensation. Furthermore, not only Quebec but now every province would be able to veto any future constitutional amendment, unanimity being the new rule.

Former Prime Minister Trudeau was not pleased. "With the assurance of a creative equilibrium between the provinces and the central government, the federation was set to last a thousand years!" he wrote for simultaneous publication in *La Presse* and the Toronto *Star*, on May 27, 1987. "Alas, only one eventuality hadn't been foreseen: that one day the government of Canada might fall into the hands of a weakling. It has now happened. And the Right Honorable Brian Mulroney . . . thanks to the complicity of ten provincial premiers, has already entered into history as the author of a constitutional document which—if it is accepted by the people and their legislators—will render the Canadian state totally impotent. That would destine it, given the dynamics of power, to eventually be governed by eunuchs."

Trudeau was equally scornful of Québécois nationalists. "The provincialist politicians, whether they sit in Ottawa or in Quebec, are also perpetual losers: they don't have the stature or the vision to dominate the Canadian state, so they need a Quebec ghetto as their haunt," he wrote. "That bunch of snivellers should simply have been sent packing and been told to stop having tantrums like spoiled adolescents. But our current political leaders lack courage. By rushing to the rescue of the unhappy losers, they hope to gain votes in Quebec; in reality, they are only flaunting their political stupidity and their ignorance of the demographic data regarding nationalism." He added, "It would be difficult to imagine a more total bungle."

In any event, the accord would not become law for three years, and there was the rub. In that time, the premiers of new governments in Manitoba, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland came out against it. So, for that matter, did a majority of Canadians in every province but Quebec—a stand for which Premier Bourassa himself bore considerable blame. Until he had invoked the notwithstanding clause and imposed Bill 178 on Quebec, most Canadians, weary of the endless bickering, were disposed to allow the province's status

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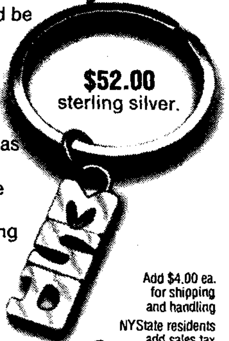

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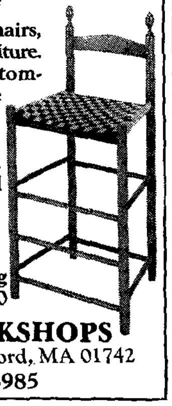

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as a distinct, a very distinct, or even a unique society to be hammered into the constitution. Not anymore. Many feared that Quebec's license to "promote" its "distinct identity" would enable it to introduce even more restrictive language laws, stifling individual rights. It is also fair to say that Canadians who were anti-French in the first place were delighted to be handed Bill 178 as a cudgel with which to beat the Québécois.

Less than two months after Premier Bourassa reminded English Canada that Quebec was capable of insuring its own development and destiny, he had to call in the Canadian Army to help him put down an increasingly acrimonious Mohawk uprising at Oka and Châteauguay. "On the legal level, it is the government of Quebec that has called on the Canadian Army and thus, finally, it is the government of Quebec that will give instructions for the use of the Army," he said.

Jacques Parizeau, the Parti Québécois leader, would have none of that. Bourassa, he charged, had turned to "Big Brother" in his moment of need.

On August 10th, after Premier Bourassa called in the Army, the equally predictable *Gazette*, the steadfast voice of Anglophone Quebecers, weighed in with a lead editorial, introduced with these headlines:

IT IS QUEBEC'S ARMY, TOO

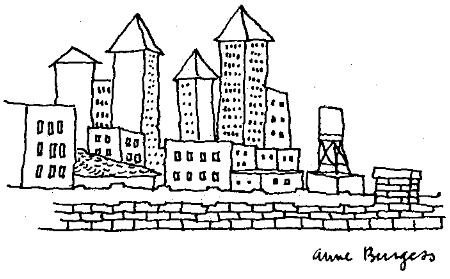
No Apology Needed for Calling in
Canadian Forces

No apology, possibly, but a sense of irony, certainly, for the Mohawks' complaints reflected those of Quebec itself in a distorting mirror. The Mohawks, a minority within *la belle province*, also wished to be recognized as a distinct society with the right to self-government. In fact, they were only the most militant of five hundred thousand aboriginals—Indians and Inuit—in Canada, some of whom looked to the courts to restore their ancestral rights to eighty-five per cent of the province's territory and wanted nothing to do with independence. "If they want to pull out with fifteen per cent of the land, we'll let them go," Max Gros-Louis, the chief of the Huron Nation in Quebec, said. "Most of that fifteen per cent is already polluted anyway." And Billy Diamond, a Cree chief, told the Toronto *Star*, "What Quebec should be talking about when it talks about separating is only the Montreal and Quebec City area, and that's it."

The trouble had flared up in Oka, about thirty miles west of Montreal, when the town's mayor moved to expand a nine-hole golf course onto an old Mohawk burial ground adjoining their settlement at Kanesatake. The Mohawks set up a blockade to stop work on the golf course on March 11th, and just four months later, on July 11th, a hundred officers of the dreaded Sûreté du Québec, its heritage of brutality unenviably rich, attacked, but retreated when one of them was fatally shot in an exchange of gunfire.

In a show of sympathy, the Mohawk Warrior Society at the Kahnawake Reserve, near Châteauguay, set up barricades on all roads leading to the Mercier Bridge, one of four bridges that connect South Shore communities with the island of Montreal. Inevitably, things began to heat up. The Mohawks, on their side, threatened to blow up the bridge; infuriated residents of Châteauguay, who now had to make endless detours to get to their jobs in Montreal, burned the Indians in effigy. This act led *Le Devoir*, seemingly unaware of its own long and disgraceful history of anti-Semitism, to discover that there was latent racism in Quebec, as elsewhere. Alain Dubuc, chief editorial writer of *La Presse*, was gratified by a poll that indicated that sixty-nine per cent of Montrealers felt that the Mohawks had legitimate grievances. How Quebec resolved this crisis with one of its own minorities, he felt, would weigh heavily in post-Meech thinking.

On August 14th—much to the relief of the Mohawks who feared the vengeance of the Sûreté—the Canadian Army, twenty-five hundred strong, moved into place opposite the barricades. And night after night through the rest of the summer no Canadian TV newscast was complete without an ugly clip of soldiers and masked Mohawk warriors, both fully armed, standing nose to nose in the woods and cursing one another. American civil-rights lawyers slipped into the Mohawk camp, and one night Jesse Jackson, trailing a throng of TV cameramen and reporters, made an appearance, only to be politely denied entry to Kanesatake by the Army. Late in August, Prime Minister Mulroney dismissed the Mohawk demand to negotiate with Ottawa, nation to nation, as bizarre. In response, Georges Eramus, the president of the Assembly of First Nations, which represents all of Canada's Indian tribes, said, "If Mulroney really believes we are bizarre in seeking more control over ourselves, then I suggest he also tell the people of Quebec . . . that they are all wet and that their claims are bizarre. I wonder if Canada is to use force on them when they start to exercise some of the sovereignty they wish."



Happily, the Army, rendered redundant by a more effective peacemaker, the Canadian winter, never did mount an assault on either Oka or Châteauguay. The first cold snap had hardly hit, some cynics noted, when the Mohawk Warriors, pledged to fight to the death, agreed to a truce. On September 6th, the barricades came down, and the Mercier Bridge was opened to traffic again.

Then Quebec, already deeply concerned about the TV images of the standoff at Châteauguay which had been seen abroad, was dealt a slap on the wrist. The United Nations Human Rights Commission criticized Quebec for its treatment of the Mohawks and admonished the government for invoking the notwithstanding clause to override a decision of the country's Supreme Court.

THE St. Lawrence River, once bright with salmon, has become a sewer. One of the busiest bridges connecting the island of Montreal with the South Shore, the Champlain, had been allowed to slide into such a state of disrepair that it had been adjudged dangerous, and repairs were recently undertaken. Quebec's hospitals are notoriously understaffed, and its universities are underfunded. But just before Christmas it was the language of signs that was the major preoccupation of our politicians once again. On December 19th, the chairman of the Montreal Urban Community Transit Corporation declared himself amazed to have been informed that bilingual advertising signs had been posted both on Montreal's buses and in its Métro system, and announced that he would have the offending ads removed as soon as possible.

The ads in question, posted by the federal government, sought recruits who might be interested in the Army reserves as a "part-time adventure—*l'aventure à temps partiel*"—and their placement earned the cash-poor M.U.C.T.C. eight hundred thousand dollars annually. That evening, Councillor Nick Auf der Maur pointed out that the transit systems in Hull and Sherbrooke, and even in Quebec City, all ran the ads with impunity. And the next morning Ludmila de Fougerolles ordained, "These are not M.U.C.T.C. ads. They belong to the federal government and are governed by the Official Languages Act. Legally, the federal government can post ads in both languages in Quebec."

Jacques Parizeau wasn't pleased. "Principles have cost us so much in the past that eight hundred thousand dollars is peanuts," he said.

A spokesperson for the Office de la Langue Française declared the signs legal, because the federal government was not subject to Quebec language laws. "However, if we had a Quebec Army these ads would be illegal," she added.

FOLLOWING the Meech debacle, Premier Bourassa announced with a straight face that he would appoint a nonpartisan commission to deliberate on Quebec's future either within or beside Canada. Since he and Parizeau could not agree on a chairman, they settled for each leader's nominating one of two committee co-chairmen. Bourassa picked Michel Bélanger, the chairman of the National Bank of Canada, who is considered a federalist. Parizeau's choice was Jean Campeau, a former chairman of the Caisse de Dépôt et Placement, who was said to favor independence. The Bélanger-Campeau commission, with thirty-five commissioners, not counting the co-chairmen, was to convene for seven weeks, beginning on November 1st; to listen to at least five hundred briefs in Montreal, Quebec City, and nine smaller centers; and then to report back to the National Assembly on March 28, 1991.

The commissioners ranged from impassioned *indépendantistes* to defensive federalists, and included some who were committed to neither side. The nationalists, emboldened by polls indicating that they enjoyed the support of sixty-five per cent of Quebecers, managed to twist the hearings into a platform for their cause, squelching any federalist who appeared before them by subjecting him to ridicule or long and convoluted questions that ate into the time allotted for his presentation. If nothing else, the hearings did reveal the chilling depths of *indépendantiste* anger. The popular Québécois novelist Yves Beauchemin, in his appearance before the commission, pointed out that the so-called rights of Quebec's English-speaking minority were in fact privileges that had been won on the Plains of Abraham. "Bilingualism exercises a devastating effect on our collective unconscious," he said. "It undermines our confidence in ourselves; it shrivels our soul. The obligation to share one's cultural space with a foreign language always expresses a defeat or a state of weakness for someone. If Adolf Hitler had won the war in 1945, France would be bilingual: French-German."

Léon Dion, the Laval University law professor who had advised Premier Bourassa to impose Bill 178 in the first place, warned the commission, "English Canada will not make concessions . . . unless it has a knife at its throat." Professor Dion recommended that Quebec allow English Canada one last chance to offer the province an acceptable constitutional deal, and said if that failed it must be prepared to opt for independence.

Nationalist economists assured the commission that separation would not foment a financial crisis. The cost of sovereignty would be negligible, they said. One economist, a banker, ventured that Quebec's share of the national deficit of approximately four hundred billion dollars would come to only eighteen and a half per cent (he seemed to have overlooked the fact that the traditional measure, Quebec's cut of the country's population, would put it at something like twenty-five per cent). And he went on to say that servicing this debt would lead to Quebec's tolerating an annual deficit of nine billion dollars—no worse than that of Denmark or Austria.

The commission also heard from an important dissenter, Jacques Henripin, who had founded and still ran the

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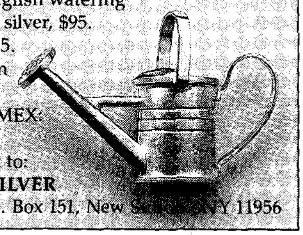

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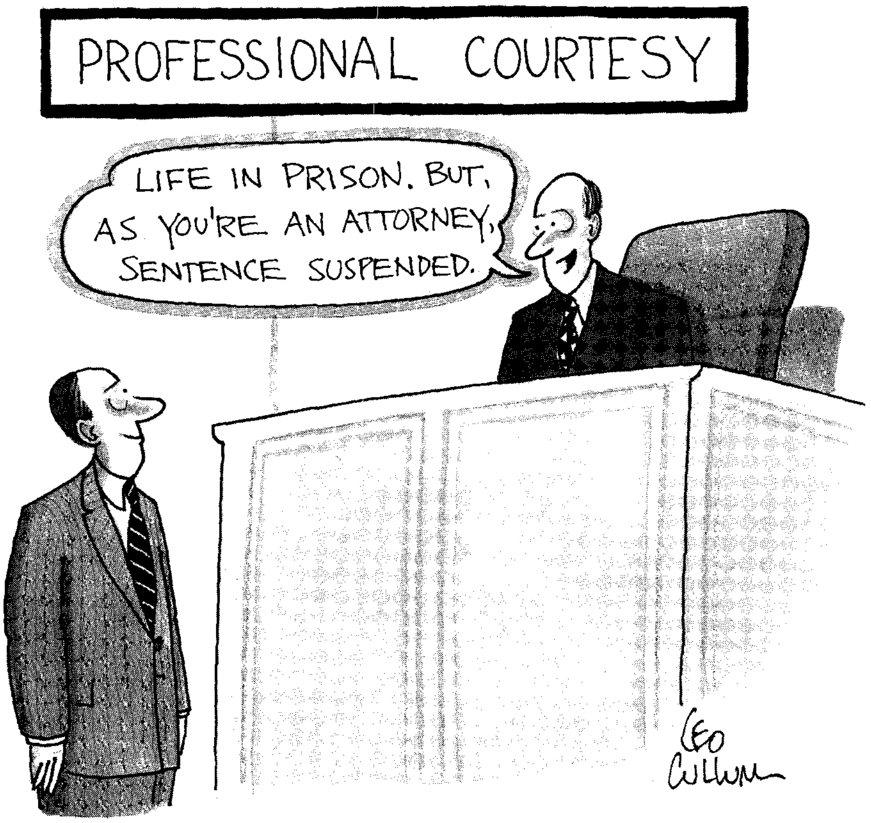
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Department of Demography of the Université de Montréal, but his contrary brief was all but ignored by the French-language press. Henripin had been a darling of the nationalists in the sixties, and his prediction that Francophones could become a minority in Montreal by the year 2000 had helped spawn Bills 22, 101, and 178. But now, having examined the entrails again, he pronounced his earlier findings wildly flawed. In a seven-page brief submitted to what he called the Bélanger-Campeau "circus," he stated that if Quebec's paramount dilemma was still its low birth rate it also had to cope with emigration, mostly Anglophone, and with the assimilation of allophone immigrants. Between 1966 and 1986, he said, an annual average of nine thousand Francophones and twenty thousand Anglophones had left Quebec for other Canadian provinces. The Anglophones, he said, took with them their furniture, i.e. their qualities, their capital, "and—something that is never mentioned—a form of collective wisdom that usefully complements that of the French-Canadian majority." He was against the banning of other languages on signs inside or outside. "Let us note also that it has never been demonstrated, to my knowledge at least, that one-quarter of English or Italian on a sign carries risks for the survival of French," he wrote. In fact, he added, "if, today, French is threatened," it wasn't by *les anglais* but "more by the poor quality of the spoken and written language."

I didn't catch up with the commission's hearings until January 16th, in Montreal—appropriately, in a faded setting of yesterday's Wasp grandeur, the former ballroom of the once modish Windsor Hotel, which had closed in 1981 and been converted into an office building. There, on a day when children in Israel were practicing their gas-mask drills, and the United States and its allies were preparing to launch a huge air attack in the Persian Gulf and their armies were anticipating a chemical counterattack, twenty-six obviously bored commissioners prepared, almost as an afterthought, to listen to briefs presented by minority groups: Hungarians, Ukrainians, Syrians—all of them fearful that an independent Quebec would put minority rights at risk. "We come from war-torn countries, so we can best appreciate the peace and tranquillity we find in Canada," one of their representatives said. Then a retired train conductor of Polish origin, a Second World War veteran, told how he had travelled the country from sea to sea, had come to love it, and did not wish to see it dismembered. Commissioner Gérald Larose, a union leader committed to outright independence, asked the old man if he was not familiar with the plight of other small nations—say, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania—and if he was unaware that the Québécois were also a people.

On March 27th, the commission, its public hearings complete and its secret deliberations ended, recommended that by October 26, 1992, the National Assembly pass a bill calling for a referendum on sovereignty, and that if a majority of Quebecers supported independence the province would become a sovereign state within a year. The proposed bill, though seemingly straightforward, came, as is the Canadian tradition, with a built-in escape hatch. Should the rest of Canada put together a binding offer on renewed federalism that appealed to Quebec, the province could vote on that proposal in a referendum rather than sovereignty.

The omens, such as they were at the time, defied analysis. Though Quebecers were obviously in a truculent mood, scornful of Ottawa, applications from them for federal civil-service jobs had nearly doubled in 1989 and 1990—rising from 17,692 to 32,733. And, if the polls were to be credited and it was true that more than sixty per cent of Quebecers favored sovereignty-association, many of them thought they could have that and continue to send M.P.s to Ottawa as well. Nothing had changed, it appeared, since the Québécois comedian Yvon Deschamps had observed, fourteen years earlier, that what Quebec really wanted was an independent Quebec within a strong and united Canada.

Even while the Bélanger-Campeau commission pondered Quebec's future, Premier Bourassa had a committee all his own, headed by a lawyer named Jean Allaire, struggling with the same issue. Its report, "A Québec Free to Choose," was released on January 29th and was to be voted on at the Liberal Party's provincial convention in March. The Allaire report allowed Canada eighteen months to agree to the committee's demands or, alternatively, to suffer a referendum on sovereignty in Quebec. It demanded that Ottawa yield jurisdiction to Quebec over no fewer than twenty-two fields, including social affairs, agriculture, education, culture, energy, environment, industry and commerce, health, natural resources, and, of course, language. Quebec would agree to share authority in ten areas, among them native affairs, financial institutions, taxation and revenue, and foreign policy. It would grant Ottawa exclusive authority over defense and territorial security, customs and tariffs, currency and common debt, and equalization. Equalization, I should explain, is a federally imposed policy that obliges the wealthy provinces—British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario—to pay money to the poorer ones, which include Quebec. Quebecers would still elect members of Parliament, but would adopt their own constitution and charter of rights. The report also called for an end to the Supreme Court's authority in Quebec and for the abolition of the Senate.

On January 31st, the lead editorial in English Canada's national newspaper, the Toronto *Globe & Mail*, ventured that Premier Bourassa had set in motion "a profound process of change," and concluded, "If Brian Mulroney is not to preside over the disintegration of the Canadian state, he must be the catalyst in redefining it. That is what history demands." But on the bottom of the editorial page Jeffrey Simpson, the most influential of English Canada's political columnists, noted, "Mr. Mulroney is already viewed as a constitutional snake-oil salesman because of Meech Lake." And at the time, according to the polls, Prime Minister Mulroney could count on the support of no more than nineteen per cent of Canadians.

Given the strictures of the Allaire report, Canada had a ticklish predicament ahead that I did not see addressed in either the English or the French press. For twenty-two of the past twenty-three years, the Prime Ministers of our country have been Quebecers born and bred. Prime Minister Mulroney is a Quebecer, and so is the new leader of the federal Liberal Party, Jean Chrétien. Should Quebec become sovereign in 1993, neither politician could be trusted to negotiate for the rest of Canada; in fact, neither man, suddenly being a born-again foreigner, could fill the office of Canadian Prime Minister.

The Allaire report, which proclaimed itself Quebec's "final and decisive test" for the rest of Canada, was adopted by the Liberal Party convention in March. Disgruntled federalists within the Party managed to have the clause that called

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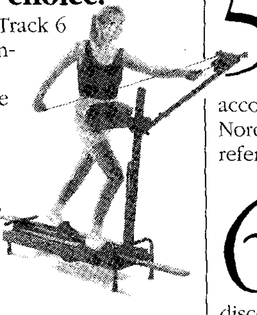

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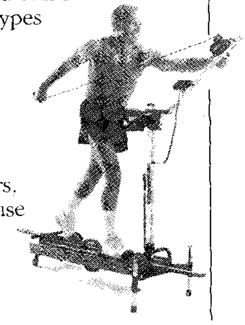

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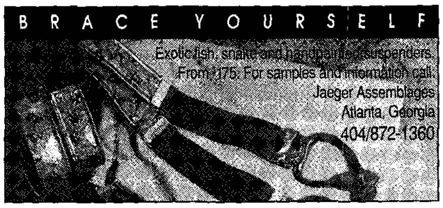

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for the abolition of the Senate softened; it now called for the institution to be terminated "in its current form"—a modification that allowed for the possibility of an elected Senate in the future. In his closing speech to the convention, Premier Bourassa conceded that the preferred choice for the Liberal Party was federalism within Canada, but the country had already been cautioned against the elixir prescribed by Allaire. Gordon Robertson, the retired Ottawa mandarin who had advised four Prime Ministers on constitutional matters, said that it would leave Canadians with "a country so weak, so incompetent in dealing with the problems ahead of us that it would be far worse to have that weak a country than to have two countries that were effective."

Québécois economists who favored sovereignty, writing off its costs as negligible, had been fond of brandishing a leaked 1990 report from the New York office of Merrill Lynch & Company, an investment firm that just happened to be one of the biggest underwriters of Quebec bonds in the United States market. In the world according to Merrill Lynch, the independence of Quebec was inevitable and, furthermore, "given the economic strength of the province, one can argue that a sovereign credit rating. . .would not be that much different from its rating as a province." But now, a year later, other reports were being leaked, including one from the First Boston Corporation, an underwriter of Hydro-Québec bonds, that concluded that the continued dithering over Canada's future made for "an element of risk" for foreign investors. Even as things stood, Canada had to offer an interest rate that was one or one and a half percentage points higher than the American rate in order to peddle its bonds.

Depending on where you paid your political dues, an independent Quebec's share of the national debt would come to something between eighty billion and a hundred and thirty billion dollars, but the notion that the province could thumb its nose at Canada if Quebec's estimate of liability was unacceptable was dismissed as a huge canard by Jeffrey Simpson, in the *Globe & Mail:*

> An independent Quebec could not walk away from its share of Canada's national debt; if it did, its reputation in world financial markets would fall to zero. Reneging on past debts is no way to raise more money.
>
> Quebec's provincial debt is the highest in Canada. If Quebec left Canada, and took along its share of the national debt (say 25 per cent), Quebec would be a heavily indebted new country.
>
> If Quebec left Canada, it would forgo equalization payments that currently account for roughly 12 per cent of provincial revenues. It would also forgo transfer payments that have historically benefited Quebec.

Nationalist economists totting up the independence bill failed to take into account what Premier Bourassa, his eye fixed on the bottom line, had once described as "profitable federalism," which yielded the province a good deal of what he referred to as "booty." Consider the Quebec dairy farmer's bonanza, for instance. Under the present system, Canada restricts the importing and exporting of milk and dairy products but grants Quebec's dairy farmers the right to supply forty-eight per cent of the country's industrial milk at a guaranteed price. If Quebec should secede, other provinces would happily take up the burden, and Quebec's share of the milk market could be governed by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade; that is, it would have to compete with other foreign producers for a 2.8 per cent share of the Canadian import market. In an independent Quebec, it should also be noted, the province's fifty-two-per-cent share of Canada's sixty thousand clothing-manufacturing jobs could also be at risk.

Meanwhile, there is no doubt that Montreal is paying a steep price for the continuing uncertainty. A confidential report to the Quebec government, leaked by *La Presse* last March, stated unequivocally that Quebec's Francization policy had done considerable damage to the city's economy. In fact, more than two hundred thousand Anglophones had quit the city over the past fifteen years. Worse news: Montreal now had the highest unemployment rate of any major city in North America. Even so, Francophone Quebecers seem to have been shocked by the results of a CROP poll published in April. It indicated that three out of ten Anglophone Quebecers planned to leave the province within the next five years, but if the province should actually separate forty-four per cent of the respondents said they would emigrate.

Pleading for understanding of the Anglophone plight, a *La Presse* editorial writer asked, "When will the purgatory of the Anglophones be over?"

And another columnist warned that if English-speaking Montrealers quit the city en masse, it would be left with "nothing more than a big Quebec City."

Then a young writer in the nationalist weekly *Voir* asked, "How long are we going to drag out this old cliché about the arrogant Anglophone? When are we going to stop demoralizing them with laws like Bill 178? When are we going to stop acting like a besieged, threatened people? How many credit unions. . .do we need to feel secure?"

Possibly it was in response to these outbursts that Premier Bourassa, unrivalled at sniffing any wind of change in public opinion, appointed the distinguished McGill philosophy professor Charles Taylor to the Conseil de la Langue Française. Taylor, a twelfth-generation Quebecer, known to be understanding of Francophone anxieties, surprised everybody by his initial statement to reporters: "I think the notion of a predominance of French without the actual outlawing of any other language is what we want. The actual banning of other languages is a measure of hysteria, frankly. There is absolutely no case that it really promotes French. The *affichage commercial* clause of Bill 101 and 178 is totally indefensible. It's utterly ridiculous. It's a product of mass neurosis. I am disgusted at the way it has not been discussed rationally."

The Parti Québécois immediately called for Taylor's resignation, but he refused to quit. Instead, he was even more refreshingly outspoken the second time round with reporters. Quebec, he said, had paid a big price for Bill 178: "It's made [Quebec] look bad in the world. It has created a tremendous gulf between the communities in Quebec, which is not good for society."

A couple of weeks after Taylor's appointment to the Conseil, a poll taken for the Southam newspaper chain led to this front-page headline in the *Gazette* of Sunday, June 2nd: "QUEBECERS PREPARED TO PULL PLUG ON SIGN LAW FOR THE RIGHT DEAL." The poll claimed that fifty-six per cent of Quebec's Francophones were willing to tear up the sign law, provided that the rest of Canada obliged with an acceptable new constitutional deal. Adding vigorish to the pot, slightly more than fifty per cent of its Francophones said that in a tradeoff for renewed federalism they would allow any Quebecer to educate his or her children in English. The same Sunday, another poll—this one taken by Institut Québécois d'Opinion Publique for *Le Soleil* and CKAC (the former a Quebec City daily and the latter a Montreal radio station)—indicated that, for the first time since February of 1990, a majority of Quebecers were opposed to sovereignty. According to the poll, fifty-one per cent preferred that Quebec remain a part of Canada, and forty-eight and nine-tenths per cent were for sovereignty.

Then a tiny fissure seemed to appear in Bill 101, previously sacrosanct in all its clauses. On June 13th, Quebec's Minister of Education, Michel Pagé, responded to some chilling statistics suggesting that, in a province where people had been led to believe that French culture was threatened with extinction, it was actually the English-speaking community that might be endangered. In 1976, there had been two hundred and thirty-six thousand students in English-language public and private schools, but by 1988-89 the number had dwindled to a hundred and fourteen thousand, and by 1992 it was expected to be under a hundred thousand. Pagé, in an interview with the *Gazette*, said he was willing to consider a change in Bill 101 that would lift the ban on English schooling for the children of immigrants from English-speaking countries; a task force would be set up in his department to study the problem, he said, and if it turned out to be in favor of adjusting Bill 101 for English-speaking immigrants he would ask the Cabinet to consider the matter. The very next day, however, he declared that he had never told the *Gazette* he would support such a change. "It is not in the program of our party," he assured the National Assembly, "and there isn't any sign the government will go in that direction."

AS things stand, Quebec is pledged to definitely, but not necessarily, hold a referendum on sovereignty next October. Or, on the other hand, the referendum could deal with the rest of Canada's binding offer for renewed federalism. Or, if such an offer was near, the referendum could be delayed. Or, instead of a referendum, there could be an election in 1993 to settle

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the question once and for all, but only for another decade.

Certainly Premier Bourassa, having put through in June the enabling legislation for a referendum, would not still be so foolish as to sanction one if he thought the vote could go against sovereignty, for that would wreck his bargaining position with the rest of Canada. So if the polls continue to show declining support for independence there will be no referendum—in spite of the propensity for tough talk by Quebec's Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Gil Rémillard. It is essential, he has said, that Quebec be recognized as a distinct society and Canada be radically changed; otherwise, there will be a referendum on sovereignty. Meanwhile, the wily Bourassa, reeling in the enthusiasm of the nationalists within his own party, has announced that he will set up two committees—one to ponder binding offers from the rest of Canada, and one to study the actual costs and disadvantages of sovereignty. If Quebec wants economic union with the rest of Canada, he has said, it must suffer political union as well, or it will be bound to endure a "democratic deficit"; that is to say, economic policies dictated by a Parliament in Ottawa in which it is not represented.

Canadians, confronted by a clear political choice, have an exasperating habit of not saying yes, not saying no, but only saying maybe. So the last time a political issue generated real emotional heat here—in the 1988 debate over the free-trade bill—they voted the Tories, advocates of the deal with the United States, back into office but split fifty-seven per cent of the popular vote between the two parties that were vehemently opposed to the bill, the Liberals and the New Democrats. Presented with a clear political choice, the Québécois, a far more subtle lot than English Canadians, tend to confound everybody else in the country by cheerfully voting both yes and no. Traditionally, they send M.P.s committed to federalism to Ottawa but put a nationalist government in place in Quebec City, and settle back to enjoy the ensuing scrimmage. In 1980, a vintage political year, they voted sixty to forty against sovereignty-association in a referendum and, eleven months later, hoisted the Parti Québécois, a party founded to promote that status, back into office.

Whichever way Quebec votes in another referendum, if it has one, the decline of Montreal will not stop. Anglophone Quebecers—the bilingual young, in particular—will continue to leave, because they feel so unwelcome. And down the road we will have something like de-facto separation, an almost totally French-speaking province, as the most ambitious and highly skilled immigrants are bound to pass over Quebec for more tolerant societies, where they are free to educate their children in the language of their choice.

In the short term, the least likely but most unpleasant possibility is that the country will stumble into partition through error or ineptitude. Brian Mulroney, it must be said, is an intensely disliked Prime Minister, consistently supported by less than twenty per cent of the voters in polls taken over the last two years. And the alternatives do not excite anybody. Unhappily, in this hour of Canadian need there is no politician of the stature of Pierre Trudeau to speak for the country. Even so, the likelihood is that next year the Québécois will retreat from the precipice once more. Abjuring sovereignty or sovereignty-association (the latter an oxymoron if there ever was one), they will probably settle for something called renewed federalism, whereby Ottawa will surrender still more of its powers to Quebec. And, in the absence of the Wizard of Oz, the Prime Minister will present the province with a scroll that declares it "a distinct society," making the painfully obvious official, as it were. And then, in 1993, if the polls are correct, a grateful Quebec will boot Robert Bourassa out of office, elect the Parti Québécois, committed to outright independence, and once more settle back to wait for the fireworks.

—MORDECAI RICHLER

•

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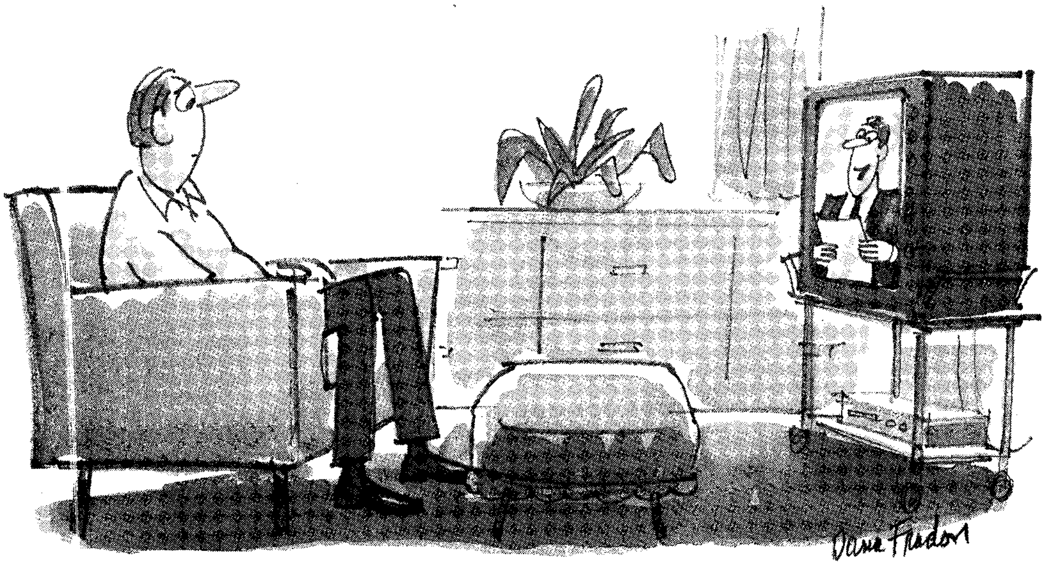
# THE CURRENT CINEMA

## *Ten Guys*

"SEX, DRUGS, ROCK & ROLL" is a one-man show in which Eric Bogosian plays, in succession, ten characters, none of whom interact with or refer to any of the others; each inhabits his own eerily self-contained world. The surprising thing about this acting tour de force is that its radically disparate parts really add up to something: in rock-and-roll terms, it's a concept album, not just a collection of singles. There are no setups for the individual bits, no connective patter—Bogosian never speaks to the audience as himself. And each monologue is a scripted, polished vignette. Bogosian may change his lines from one performance to another (several of the bits in this show are variations on characters from earlier works, like "Drinking in America" and "FunHouse"), but he never appears to be improvising onstage. His comedy has an oddly deliberate, formal quality: his mimetic virtuosity, even at its most dazzling, doesn't produce (or aspire to) the exhilaration of Robin Williams' rapid-fire metamorphoses or the daredevil riffing that Richard Pryor practiced at his late-seventies peak. Bogosian is both a wild man and a control freak, in more or less equal measures, and the conflict between these impulses has always been part of the tension in his performances—a tension that in his earlier work often didn't seem quite expressive enough. He would invent psychotic, aggressive characters who were meant to rattle and frighten the audience, and alternate these punk-Dostoyevskian sketches with the monologues of self-satisfied successful types—yuppie businessmen, honey-voiced evangelists, respectable suburban homeowners, all of them mouthing pointedly smug apologias for their life styles. The intention, clearly, was to create a kind of dialectical swing in the audience's responses, but the effect was sometimes merely schizophrenic. In those performances, Bogosian had a tendency to exaggerate both the violence of his down-and-outers and the offensive complacency of his more privileged characters, and the audience would find itself Ping-Ponging between the equally unproductive emotions of shock and condescension.

In "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll," Bogosian uses essentially the same mixture of extreme character types, but his writing and, especially, his acting have become more assured, less desperate. Although he's still a forceful, high-energy performer, he seems more willing now to allow the audience some freedom in responding to his characters. This picture, directed (erratically) by John McNaughton, was filmed in concert-movie style, with multiple cameras and before a paying crowd, and we sense that the live audience is with Bogosian all the way: he looks relaxed and confident, aware that he doesn't have to cajole reactions out of these people. The first character he presents to us is, cunningly, a performer (of sorts) who explicitly wants something out of his audience. Bogosian, leaning on a cane, takes the stage as a subway panhandler—a type familiar to all New Yorkers—who delivers long, practiced spiels to uneasy passengers on moving trains. "I only want a few minutes of your time. . . . I am not a drug addict. . . . I need your money. I could be out robbing and stealing right now; I don't want to be doing that. I could be holding a knife up to your throat right now; I don't want to be doing that. . . . I want to work. But I can't. My medication costs over two thousand dollars a week, of which Medicaid only pays one third. . . . I'm a victim of a sick society. . . . I can't change my life—you can." In this brief sketch, Bogosian—mimicking superbly the weary, flat tones of such appeals—provides a funny, disturbing image of a certain way of working a crowd. By the time the panhandler has finished his speech, the captive audience has had all its buttons pushed. He evokes every emotion that might induce someone to give him what he wants—pity, guilt, fear, sheer confusion. And when Bogosian stops talking he holds out his cup to people in the first row of the theatre.

This opening sketch is very effective on its own terms, but its full irony becomes apparent only later on. There's a real progression in the course of "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll," from characters who provoke immediate, visceral reactions to characters whose effect on us is more ambiguous. In light of the entire piece, Bogosian's initial presentation of himself as a glibly menacing panhandler might almost be an acknowledgment of the coerciveness and overt neediness of some of his previous work. Bogosian *could* hold a knife up to our throats—as he's done in the past, as he occasionally does even here—but he seems not to want to do that so much anymore. We can feel that he's trying to resist the temptation to get at us with shock tactics and facile, knowing jokes at the expense of



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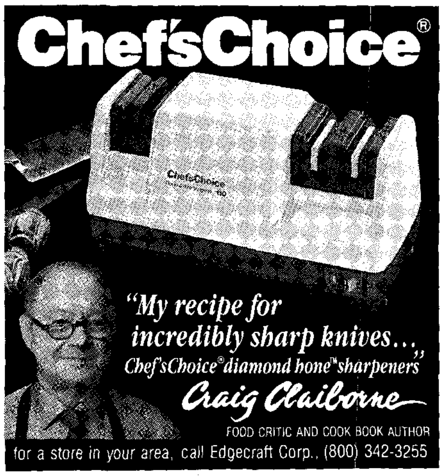

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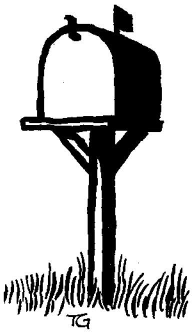
his characters, and, although he doesn't always succeed, it's hard not to appreciate the effort.

What we appreciate even more, though, is that Bogosian's work actually gets funnier as the movie goes along. The second vignette, in which he plays a smarmy, arrogant English rock star who's appearing on a talk show to plug a benefit concert, is full of big laughs, but the premise is rather thin. It's the sort of conceit that seems better suited to a loose and relatively casual standup routine: seeing it as part of a formal, structured theatre piece forces us to wonder why, in the great scheme of things, Bogosian is mounting this protracted assault on such a small, easy target. (One of the limitations of his method is that he can't draw on the good will that audiences extend toward more spontaneous performers, like Williams and Pryor.) The basic joke of the rock-star segment is that the character is an insufferable egotist who will say or do just about anything to make an audience love him; his hand, like the panhandler's, is always out. And so is Bogosian's in the first half of "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll." He gives us characters that will supply him with more or less immediate gratification in terms of audience response: he follows the fatuous rocker with three characters he has played before—pre-tested bits. In all three, he has improved on the earlier versions: the acting is subtler, and the anecdotes are richer and more complex. Essentially, though, what Bogosian is doing is warming us up, using his surefire stuff to prepare us for the riskier, more demanding material in the final part of the show.



The last three monologues in "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll" are probably the finest work Eric Bogosian has ever done. The bits that lead up to them have been linked by an implicit common theme: each character, in his own way, has been articulating (or failing to articulate) his relationship to the consumer culture of America in the eighties and early nineties. The haves have lots of things; the have-nots have, instead, *idées fixes*, spectacularly elaborate and ingenious theories to explain their deprivation; and everyone has appetites, cravings for more of *something*. The urgency of these needs is the basis of the comedy. In the eighth segment of "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll," Bogosian turns himself into a cigar-puffing, out-of-shape fifty-one-year-old suburbanite. Rubbing his abdomen and looking faintly ill, he delivers his opening line: "Every time I have the fried calamari with the hot sauce, I feel like I'm gonna blow up"—and that observation is as close to introspection as the character ever gets. In his after-dinner stupor, he launches into a demented celebration of the material abundance of his life: his swimming pool, his gazebo ("Cost me sixty-five hundred dollars, I don't even know what it is"), his Havana cigars, his top-of-the-line BMW. He is, of course, a satiric image of the conspicuous consumer; the beauty of the bit is that he is also completely disarming. He satisfies his appetites and then some, and displays not a trace of shame or self-consciousness about his gluttony. "You're afraid to have, you're afraid to own, you're afraid to *live*"—that's his philosophy, and he's refreshingly up-front about it. He's no crazier than anyone else in "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll," and Bogosian plays him with great affection. By the end of the monologue, this crude guy really seems like some sort of life-force character—a sluggish Zorba the Greek, laboriously raising his arms to Heaven in gratitude for the world's plenty.

After this hilarious apotheosis of material success, Bogosian ends the show with a pair of brilliant have-not monologues. The first is a bitter, self-absorbed rant spoken by a poor young New York artist. Sitting in a tense, coiled position and rarely looking up at the audience, this soft-voiced failure speeds through a catalogue of the ways in which society has humiliated him, denied him his rightful share of both money and respect. The character allows Bogosian to show off his special talent for fast-talking, ferocious negativity—the talent he overindulged as the vicious call-in-show host in "Talk Radio." Consumed with envy and resentment, the artist complains about the rotten conditions of his life, fantasizes his revenge on those who have kept him down, and works himself into a sarcastic lather as he describes the happy bourgeois life that he feels excluded from. He's a terrible person, as he freely admits, yet his contemptuous riff on yuppie bliss has a certain mean-spirited truth, and it's uproariously funny. This is the show's moment of comic catharsis. Bogosian lets himself identify with this shallow, greedy underground man, and makes us identify with him, too.

The negative-guy sequence is inspired, unusually resonant comedy. The final monologue creates the same sort of ambivalent laughter. The speaker who gets the last word in "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll" is a sixties-style pothead paranoiac, who sits cross-legged on the stage and takes huge, deep drags on a joint as he rambles through a recitation of his pet conspiracy theories. He's fixated, like a Pynchon character, on the power of machines. TV transmits messages from outer space, telling us to work harder and buy more—especially microwave ovens, which, for some reason, seem to him particularly sinister. The government, he says, is building a giant computer to control us all. "Computer's gonna watch everybody, man; you do something in your house the computer doesn't like, it's gonna send a message to your TV set. TV set's gonna send a message to your microwave oven, door's gonna pop open, you're gonna be *ashes*, man." He's an old-fashioned counterculture dropout; he has stopped making art, he says, because "the system collects artists' minds" and "the only way to escape the system is not to do anything." Bogosian makes us laugh at the slow, distracted rhythms of this stoned discourse, at the science-fiction luridness of the character's imagination, and at the solemn conviction with which he expounds his looniest ideas. But, as in the two previous monoogues, Bogosian inhabits the characer so intensely that we can feel ourselves getting lured into some very strange emotional territory. We're not ready to endorse the ideas of any of Bogosian's people, but every now and hen we come closer than we'd thought we could. We see the poetic sense of his monologuists' bizarre belief sysems. He makes each of these philosophies coherent in terms of the individual experiences that have given rise to them; we see, that is, why each of he lunatics and fools in "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll" is convinced that his kewed perspective is a comprehensive vision of the world. That's an amazing hing for a comic performer to do.

—TERRENCE RAFFERTY

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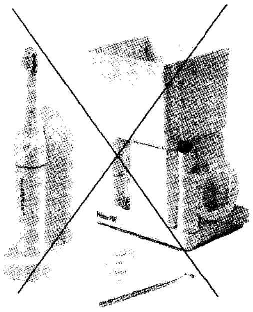

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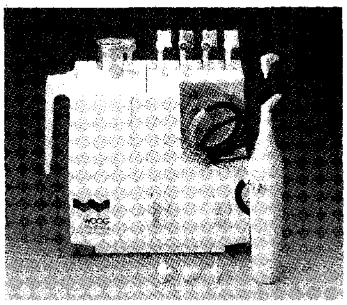

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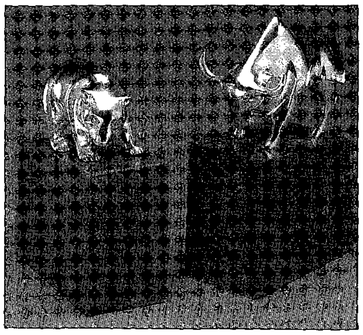

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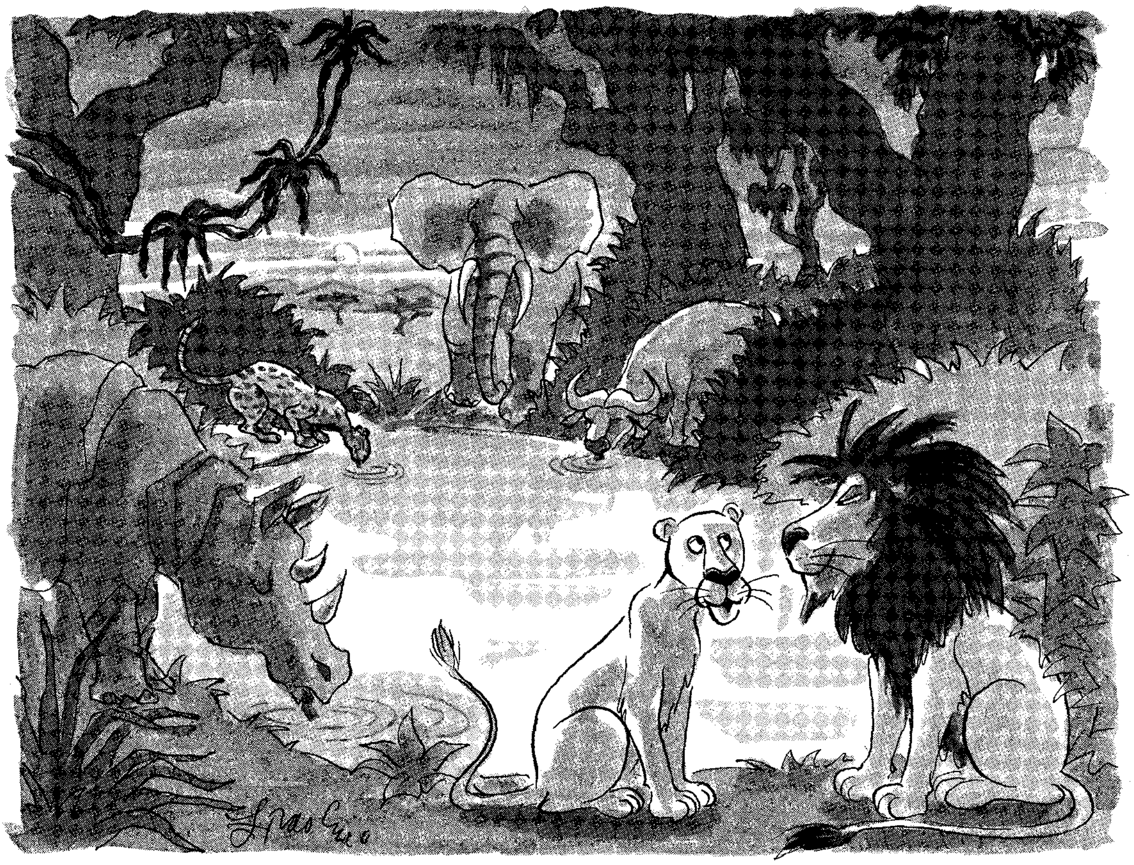
# LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

SEPTEMBER 12

THE collapse of Soviet Communism came so swiftly and, in hindsight, with such apparent ease that future historians will wonder why virtually no one in official Washington saw it coming—at least, so soon. In fact, almost no one foresaw even the attempted putsch by the Old Guard: a few major Soviet figures predicted that there would be one, but not when it would occur; even when the coup failed it was not obvious that Communism would end up on the dustheap so soon. Nor, though there were early signs that the coup wasn't everything a serious coup should be, was it obvious that it would fail so quickly. The Bush Administration, scrambling to react in the midst of what one official calls "the fog of crisis," did react cautiously, but there were good reasons for caution. This was one of any number of situations in which the Administration's actions could be—and are being—second-guessed, but, given the uncertainties it was dealing with, and the stakes, its performance was, on the whole, quite good. This was, after all, the biggest event in Russian history since 1917, and one with profound implications. It was an event with at least a hundred potential knock-on effects, and we're far from the end of the line. Fear of chaos, total economic collapse, possibly winter famine, and a new era of oppression have given a new urgency to American policy.

When an attempt by essentially the same cast of characters to seize power from Gorbachev in June failed, Administration officials read it as the last gasp of the Old Guard; in fact, it foreshadowed the recent coup attempt. Logically, if the coup leaders were going to strike, this was the best moment—perhaps the last best moment: Gorbachev was on vacation in the Crimea, and the Union treaty, which was to transfer certain authority from the central government to the republics, was about to be signed. As it happens, the very factor that contributed so much to the coup's failing—the lack of thorough planning—was the major reason it came as a surprise. A senior Administration official says, "The planning was within such a small circle that there was no noise and very limited activity; if it had been a more serious attempt we'd have picked something up." Officials manning the crisis centers during the early hours of Monday, August 19th, first established that what had occurred was in fact a coup—that Gorbachev was not ill—and by 5 A.M. sent word to that effect to President Bush, in Kennebunkport. The President has come under criticism for making a cautious statement on Monday morning, but Bush is a cautious man, and so is Brent Scowcroft, his national security adviser; besides, a great deal wasn't yet known. A senior Administration official says, "Being prudent, we weren't going to make a bold statement in any direction." He says, "The conventional wisdom in the early hours was that this particular group could last months—there was no reason to think they'd be gone in three days—and therefore they'd be at the other end of the phone and have thirty thousand nuclear weapons. There was a responsibility to have contact with the people at the other end of the phone—but not undermine any chance of getting Gorbachev free." In the thinking of one key official, the Administration's response should deny the coup-makers any legitimacy but shouldn't come across as a threat.



*"I must confess I've noticed your stopping by for a drink, but I never dreamed you'd noticed me."*

As we know, the President is partial to working with the powers that be (with some exceptions), and he and Scowcroft are descendants of the policy of détente (Scowcroft was one of its original implementers); whoever is in charge of the Soviet Union, we have to deal with him, or them. In his Monday-morning comments, the President even suggested that Gennady Yanayev, the leader of the coup, "has a certain commitment to reform." Yanayev, the Vice-President of the Soviet Union and a Party apparatchik, had escorted Bush to Kiev following the Moscow summit in late July. The President also saw fit to call the coup "extra-constitutional"—which evolved into the tougher "unconstitutional" in a statement released by the White House later that day.

In between, the President had returned to Washington for some meetings, received from Boris Yeltsin, the President of the Russian Republic, a plea for help in an attempt to reverse the coup, and spoken with other world leaders. (British Prime Minister John Major is believed by one official to have stiffened the President's spine, just as Major's predecessor had done a year earlier.) Another factor, in the view of one official, was a strong statement made Monday afternoon by Senator Sam Nunn, Democrat of Georgia, on CNN. (Nunn said, "I think that we ought to be very strong in condemning what's occurred.") In the morning, an official suggests, the President wanted to keep his options open. Another official suggests that the President shouldn't have made any statement until more was known about what was going on; he also suggests that the President had to make a statement because he was on vacation and would have been trapped by the press corps on the way to one of his sports activities. Perhaps, but Bush didn't have to speak until he chose to. The expectation has grown that the President will have an instant comment on just about everything; by contrast, according to Michael R. Beschloss's recent book "The Crisis Years," it was eight days before John F. Kennedy responded publicly to the building of the Berlin Wall.

Although fairly soon after the coup began officials noticed that several elements were missing—certain military components hadn't shown up, outside communications hadn't been shut down, Yeltsin and other reformers hadn't been rounded up—an official insists that the President's tougher statement issued on Monday afternoon wasn't issued with the thought that the coup would quickly collapse. There was, however, an official says, "a back-of-the-mind whisper that said 'Keystone Cops.'" Another official says, 'We immediately concluded that these guys wouldn't be able to govern the Soviet Union." The prevailing view on Monday was that the coup might work, but not for long—three or four months, say—because this group wouldn't be able to do anything about economic reforms, and chaos was looming. Officials didn't know at the time that some of the coup leaders were stone drunk. There was at the time a lot of speculation about why the coup was incomplete (one theory is that the coup leaders thought Gorbachev would sign a capitulatory statement); but in fact, for all the holes in the planning for the coup, it wasn't until after Tuesday that policymakers got an official intelligence estimate that the thing could collapse, and Administration officials couldn't breathe easy until it was over. Even one reckless tank commander could have caused a catastrophe.

Also on Monday morning, Administration officials compiled a list of all ongoing projects and contacts with the Soviet Union, to see what projects should be terminated or curtailed—every contact, no matter how trivial, was reviewed. For example, a government lawyer who was to go to Moscow to in effect clean up typos in the recently signed START agreement was held back. The whole operation, an official explains, was S.O.P. for crisis management: react cautiously at first, press the intelligence community for more information, and review all our dealings with the given country to see what should be curtailed or terminated. Also on Monday morning, work began on drafting a "core statement" that would embrace the Administration's view of the matter. It took much of the day to get the statement worked out among the various participants. The statement was given to the Soviet Ambassador to Washington on Monday afternoon and formed the basis of the President's afternoon statement.

BEFORE the coup, the Administration had been tentatively and somewhat awkwardly groping its way toward a new relationship with Yeltsin. It had begun working toward a new set of relationships between the United States and the central Soviet government and between us and the republics. The idea was to gently move in the direction of the republics by channelling technical assistance directly to

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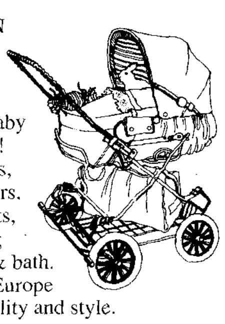

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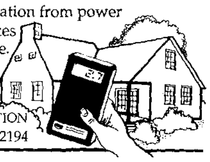

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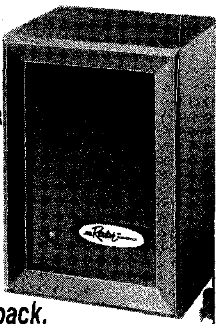

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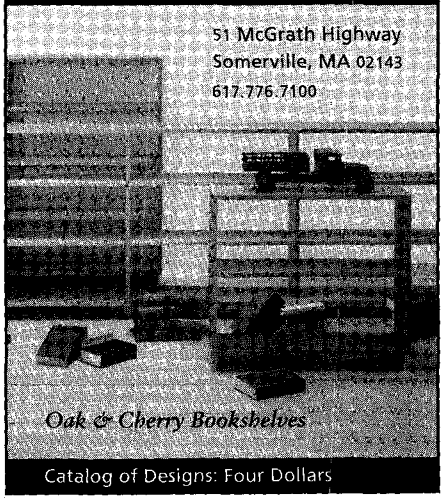

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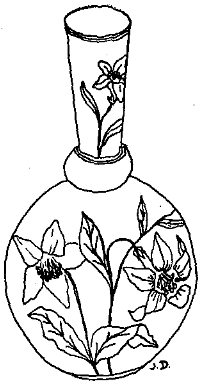
them—largely as a pragmatic approach to getting the job done. A lot of the impetus for reform—in food distribution, in converting the defense industry, in developing and distributing energy—was coming from the republics. If Congress had appropriated money for technical assistance to help these reforms along—which it hadn't—the money was to go to wherever would most likely get the job done. When Bush was at the Moscow summit, the United States negotiated with a reluctant central government a protocol allowing technical assistance to go straight to the republics. And the Administration supported the process that led to the Union treaty's shifting some authority from the central government to the republics. Finding a new arrangement with Yeltsin without upsetting the one with Gorbachev was more complicated. The President had good reason for gratitude to Gorbachev: he had ushered in political reforms that six years ago would have seemed inconceivable; Eastern Europe had been set free; he had coöperated in the Persian Gulf and on Middle East diplomacy. Gorbachev hadn't gone far enough on economic reform or further political reforms, but he had kept at bay the forces of reaction—until the coup. Bush is big on establishing personal relationships with world leaders and, after a shaky start (his press secretary had called Gorbachev a "drugstore cowboy"), he had established a warm and useful one with Gorbachev.



Moreover, Yeltsin had made a terrible impression on both Bush and Scowcroft during his first visit to the United States, in 1989. He had been clumsy, to say the least, on that trip, earning the profound dislike of Scowcroft—who let his views be known to the press—and made no fan in George Bush. Earlier this year, some officials on the staff of the National Security Council and on the sixth floor of the State Department (the very highest officials, including Secretary of State James Baker, dwell on the seventh floor) felt that we were in the wrong place as regards Yeltsin and should work for better ties to him. Yeltsin appeared to be serious about economic and political reform, the argument went, and was becoming increasingly popular in Russia. "It made no sense to put our head in the sand about him," an official says. The suggestion was made that a message be sent to Yeltsin that when he made his scheduled trip here in June, at the invitation of congressional leaders, he be invited to the Oval Office; he had got only as far as Scowcroft's office the last time, with a "drop-by" by the President. When Bush and Yeltsin appeared in the Rose Garden following their June meeting, the President took such care not to offend Gorbachev that he did an elaborate tap dance in which he praised Yeltsin but was also at pains to pay homage to Gorbachev for *glasnost* and *perestroika*—"the pivotal factors enabling us to end the Cold War and make Europe whole and free."

During his trip to Moscow, Bush met with Yeltsin (Yeltsin refused to meet with Bush and Gorbachev together), but officials pointed out what they felt were more examples of boorish behavior by Yeltsin. And when Bush went on to Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, he made a speech that seemed to be warning the republics not to be so eager to leave the Soviet Union (as the Ukraine, among others, was). This went against the politics of those in the United States who were keen on seeing a breakup of the Soviet Union, and certainly didn't go down well with the large community of Ukrainian-Americans, whom Administration officials were subsequently at pains to try to pacify. Officials, defensive about the speech—which was drafted in Moscow, and in which several people had a hand—say now that it was actually written with an eye toward Georgia, which is led by a dictator (though an elected one) and had already seen a lot of ethnic violence. They also say that they were addressing the question of the general principles—tolerance, democracy, freedom, and economic liberty—that should guide new relationships between the center and the republics. They say that the news reports about the speech missed its nuances—but that's a hazard officials have to keep in mind; perhaps the last-minute drafting in Moscow worked against them. (Sc defensive was the Administration abou the speech that Scowcroft prepared piece defending it for the Op-Ed pag of the New York *Times*—where, as it happened, it appeared on the eve of the coup.)

THE relationships between Moscow and the republics and between Gorbachev and Yeltsin became domestic issues in the United States—perhaps not issues that seize millions of people, or that matter as much to most people as whether they can walk down the street without getting shot, but they had a sharp ideological edge to them. The position of the American right had evolved from one of blanket hatred of the Soviet Union to a more subtle set of views. Obviously, this development came about because of the changes that Gorbachev had wrought, but it ended in vehement anti-Gorbachevism. Broadly speaking, the right in this country became pro-Yeltsin and anti-Gorbachev. (Last year, Gorbachev threw in with the forces of the Soviet right for a while, but then he tacked back.) It became critical of the slow pace of Gorbachev's economic reforms, and of his clinging to the Communist system. The American right (not just Republicans) has assumed the pro-democracy mantle; it's not that liberals are against democracy, of course, but the cause of promoting democratic regimes now also has the energy—and many of the same people—behind it that anti-Communism used to. Even before Gorbachev, sprung from the captivity imposed by the coup leaders, took a little too long to renounce Communism, Yeltsin was seen by the American right as more inclined toward democracy, and his having actually been elected President of the Russian Republic gave him standing with the right here; also, he had begun to take steps to reduce the Communist Party's power in Russia.

But behind it all was a continued wish to see the breakup of the Soviet Union. The more power that went to the republics and the less power the central government had, the better, but a breakup was the preferred mode. Yeltsin was a symbol, an antipode to Gorbachev, and he became the darling of the right before many people knew very much about him—and well before he became the hero of the anti-coup. Some conservatives will say that there is a legitimate question as to whether ethnic violence in the republics is more or less likely if the federation is held together, but at bottom

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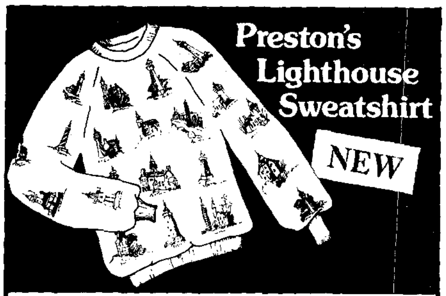
they think that ethnic violence isn't so much of a direct threat to us, and the possibility of it shouldn't guide our policy, or necessitate a strong central government. Others feel more responsibility for avoiding ethnic violence if possible, and think that should be a foreign-policy goal—up to a point. Most European nations—some of which live on the Soviet Union's borders—prefer a center with real authority.

Despite his flaws, the venom directed at Gorbachev from the American right has been strange, since even some conservatives will concede that he paved the way for Yeltsin. He may not have understood how far he should push change, but he pushed through some astonishing changes. He may have caved to the Soviet Old Guard too much, but clearly it was a threat. The American right's preference for Yeltsin produced strains within the Administration. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and Vice-President Dan Quayle, who are closer to the right than other top officials, have been more pro-Yeltsin than Bush, Scowcroft, and Baker—in Cheney's case, outspokenly so (even after Baker, Scowcroft, and Cheney had supposedly coördinated their comments in a telephone discussion before appearing on Sunday talk shows in late August).

Bush's feeling of a personal bond with Gorbachev, and of gratitude, has caused him to react protectively toward him. Bush and Scowcroft dislike Yeltsin not just because of what they saw as his boorish behavior but also because they believe he has demagogic and autocratic tendencies. Yeltsin may have saved Gorbachev during the coup, but his bullying of Gorbachev shortly afterward didn't go down at all well in the White House (Gorbachev's episodes of bullying are more readily forgiven), and he was seen as overreaching in the days following the coup. Through the issuance of a series of decrees, he seemed bent on establishing Russian dominance. The most worrisome business at that point was Yeltsin's threatening the republics which might leave the union that their borders might have to be adjusted to bring territories largely inhabited by Russians into the Russian Republic. A senior Administration official says, "I saw the makings of a second coup." But Yeltsin's actions didn't go over so well among many of his own people, either, and he accepted their counsel to back off (at least as far as the borders were concerned). Yeltsin is said to have some impressive, quite pro-democratic people around him who will check his autocratic instincts. It may be too much to expect a Thomas Jefferson to arise out of all this—Peter the Great, the autocratic reformer, may be the more apt precedent—but some observers who have long been dubious about the Russian reform impulse are encouraged. Gorbachev's clinging to Communism in his first press conference after the coup didn't win him high marks with the Administration, and then he, too, quickly changed.

Scowcroft surprised a lot of people here with his uncharacteristically harsh comments about Yeltsin in a background briefing in Kennebunkport at the end of August. No one is supposed to know who gives a backgrounder, but news accounts left no question that Scowcroft had done the talking. A number of Administration officials—even those who also have misgivings about Yeltsin—felt that this had been a mistake on the part of Scowcroft, a careful man who doesn't make many public mistakes. Since Scowcroft is rarely not at Bush's side—literally and figuratively—a number of people also concluded that he must have been speaking with Bush's concurrence, if not connivance. Even if Bush and Scowcroft were still down on Yeltsin, the question was what purpose was served by attacking a man who was a hero and whose coöperation would be needed. The most plausible theory I've heard is that Scowcroft's remarks were an attempt to slow down the press stampede toward Yeltsin; another theory was that Scowcroft was trying to send a signal to Yeltsin to watch his step, not overreach. But Yeltsin had already done some considerable behavioral adjusting by the time Scowcroft briefed. Scowcroft's remarks set off a new round of controversy here, and seemed negated by the close coöperation between Gorbachev and Yeltsin last week in getting the Congress of People's Deputies to abolish the Soviet system—and itself.

LAST Thursday afternoon, there was a lengthy Oval Office meeting of the Administration's top foreign-policy and defense officials to assess where matters stood. The consensus was that Gorbachev and Yeltsin had stabilized the situation, and that it was in the



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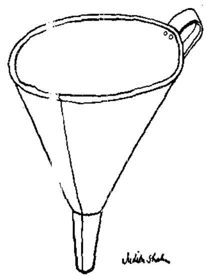
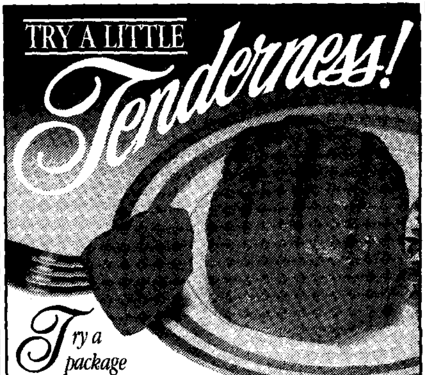
interest of the United States that their partnership continue—and also that, to the extent we have influence within what is to be the former Soviet Union, our preference was still for some sort of union, so as to have someone at the center to negotiate and make policy with, to make sure that nuclear weapons are under central control, and to try to get a coherent economic-reform program. Last Friday, an Administration official (not Scowcroft) gave a background briefing in which he said that the Administration felt that Gorbachev and Yeltsin had worked together "in a way that probably saved the situation," and added—saying that he spoke for the Administration—"We can work with Yeltsin in the future." Though one purpose of the Thursday meeting was to get everyone on board the policy, it didn't quite work out that way. Two days later, Quayle gave an interview in which he took a pessimistic view of the Soviet Union's future, and he and Cheney are resisting any early moves to give the Soviet Union substantial aid, or to find the proceeds for such aid in the Pentagon budget. But most senior officials—including the President—seem to understand that that's where the money for the aid will come from, and Cheney may well be staking out a position against what he knows is the coming tide. (He's done that before.)



The Administration plans to send emergency food and medical aid to help what is to be called the Union of Sovereign States make it through the winter (in addition to everything else, there has been a bad harvest), and more extensive aid awaits an acceptable economic-reform plan, to be presented to the International Monetary Fund. Baker, who is in the Soviet Union this week, announced a change in policy by saying that the United States is prepared to provide direct aid as soon as a serious commitment to economic reforms is made and a plan is drawn up; the requirement used to be that the reform be implemented before aid is provided. A team of economic reformers has been drafting a new plan, but no one is sure whether, given the weakening of the center, the recent developments make such a plan more or less workable. Bush's caution caused him to lag, once more, behind the allies in proposing aid, even when it was clear that aid in the form of food and medicine was essential. Bush finally said as much before he left Kennebunkport on the day after Labor Day. In fact, Bush isn't very fond of the Group of Seven economic-policy process, and the United States didn't welcome the special G-7 meeting held in London at the end of August to consider speeding up aid to the Soviet Union. For all Bush's homage to multilateral approaches to international problems, he prefers dealing with the other leaders on an individual basis on the telephone, and doesn't wish to be pushed by any group. (He became impatient with the regularly scheduled G-7 meeting held in London in mid-July.) Bush is, among other things, reluctant to talk about significant aid until it is clearer what the precise needs are and how such aid would be handled. Then he could have a domestic political fight on his hands, as some factions oppose any aid to the Soviet Union and some argue that if the Pentagon till is to be dipped into, the funds should go to domestic programs. Bush's slowness in granting recognition to the independence of the Baltics also came under criticism, but he had a good reason: so as not to undermine the shaky new regime in Moscow, he wanted to give the Soviet government a chance to recognize Baltic independence first. But he wasn't prepared to wait very long.

Bush may not talk about these things with panache, but most of the time he essentially comes out at the right place. Officials here know that they've been lucky thus far—that the coming months could bring turmoil and ethnic violence, and that it's premature to assume that the Soviet Union is now a harmonious collection of democratic states. A lot of existing arrangements are going to have to be reexamined—NATO, the European Community, the defense budget, among others. Officials know that they are in for a long ride—and it may not be smooth—but they also know, as they rush from meeting to meeting and prepare papers and travel to Europe and the Soviet Union, that they are grappling with the fallout from one of the most important and exciting episodes in the twentieth century.

—Elizabeth Drew



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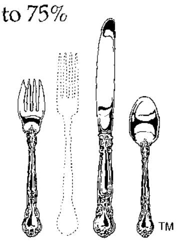

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## *Syzygy*

Mayor David Dinkins, who had immense problems to deal with in this city even before the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn erupted into violence last month, for weeks had been busy, along with many members of his staff, working on arrangements for what was to be his first visit to South Africa, scheduled to begin on September 16th. Some saw the Mayor's determination to go ahead with the eight-day trip, which even some staff members privately considered an expensive and poorly timed junket (one television reporter, who declined to go, called it an eight-day photo opportunity), as an effort to somehow recapture the euphoria that prevailed at City Hall—and, indeed, in much of the city—during Nelson and Winnie Mandela's visit to New York last year, which Dinkins has often said marked, hands down, the high point of his time as mayor. Since that happy occasion, the news from here has been increasingly grim, particularly reports involving race relations. These have especially depressed New Yorkers who voted for Dinkins on the theory—surely an unfair burden to lay on him—that as the city's first black mayor he would serve as a healer, insuring relative amity in a city whose population is the most racially and ethnically diverse, and among the most volatile, of urban populations anywhere.

For the South African trip, the Mayor planned to charter a Lockheed L-1011, which seats three hundred. In view of the punishing budget cuts that financial circumstances forced his administration to impose on New Yorkers in recent months, Dinkins could hardly suggest that the city pay for the trip. It was announced that its cost, of nearly half a million dollars, would be underwritten entirely by private donors, except for the cost of security guards. As planned, the official delegation to what the Mayor referred to as the "homeland" was to be made up of—besides Dinkins, his wife, Joyce, and eight mayoral aides—top members of the administration and related agencies, representatives from philanthropic and ethnic organizations (for instance, the Institute for the Italian American Experience), and some economic advisers, such as representatives from Bear Stearns and J. P. Morgan. Also coming along were Brooklyn Assemblyman Al Vann, Dinkins' doctor, the pastor of Dinkins' Harlem church, and the Reverend Herbert Daughtry. Since most of the city officials and Dinkins cronies would not be contributing to the cost, filling up the plane with paying customers, including members of the press and delegates sent by corporate sponsors, was a compelling priority. However, the media owners' interest in sending along reporters, at a cost of six thousand dollars a head just for transportation, fell far short of a stampede, and the fund-raising among corporate donors went slowly indeed. Many of the prospective sponsors had also had the arm put on them for the five-million-dollar cost of the June parade to welcome home the troops from the Gulf War, and, in addition, some had contributed to the two-hundred-and-eighty-seven-thousand-dollar cost of Dinkins' so-called urban summit last November, when he invited the mayors of thirty-five American cities to meet here for a weekend and—not exactly a historic breakthrough—send the federal government the message that it should do more for cities.

*Clothes make the self.*

A week before the plane was scheduled to take off, the Mayor was still announcing details of the trip. One difficulty about the fund-raising was that most of it was being done by Bill Lynch, one of his five deputy mayors (and the only black among them), and, during the previous three weeks, Lynch had also been the main Dinkins man in the effort to keep the lid on in Crown Heights, for a time spending most of every night there. Though only about two hundred thousand dollars had been raised, Dinkins, who often describes himself as an optimist, planned to fly off to South Africa on credit. On September 10th, Joe Calderone, who covers City Hall for *Newsday*, published an article with the headline "WHO IS PAYING FOR TRIP TO S. AFRICA?" Although the Mayor's office had declined to reveal the names of contributors to the trip, Calderone listed the many contributors to the urban summit, for which Lynch was also Dinkins' chief money-raiser, and noted how especially successful they had been in winning city contracts or favorable city treatment thereafter.

That same day, the Mayor, verging on tears, announced that the trip had been postponed. To some mayor-watchers, Dinkins' handling of the aborted trip was a reminder of what they see as serious problems with his governing style. There was the failure to think things through. There was the conviction that whatever he feels passionately about must be accepted as worthy. There was the heedlessness of conflict-of-interest questions. There was his stubborn refusal to change his plans despite criticism over where his priorities lay. (During the two weeks of the U.S. Open tennis tournament, a period that coincided with many of the troubles in Crown Heights and with other local disasters, such as the worst subway crash in sixty-three years, there was not a day when the Mayor did not attend at least one of the matches—including August 26th, which began with his speaking at the funeral of Gavin Cato, the seven-year-old black boy whose death set off the uprising in Crown Heights.) And the opulence of the venture was one more reminder of his insistence on travelling first class. After the flight was cancelled, Jim Dwyer in his *Newsday* column announced, "The Flying Headboard has been grounded." He harked back to Dinkins' celebrated Gracie Mansion headboard, for which the city was billed eleven thousand five hundred dollars, and to his own successful searching out of what he called Human Headboards—city officials who were not laid off in the harsh budget-cutting process but were kept sitting around doing nothing at seventy thousand dollars a year. The headline over the column was "IS CITY SANE? ONLY IF HEADBOARDS FLY."

EVEN before the tragedies that led to the Crown Heights rioting, there was a convergence of scheduled events in the city which constituted almost a syzygy—of racial, rather than celestial, significance. On August 24th, there was to be an emotional commemoration, led by the Reverend Al Sharpton, of the anniversary of the shooting down of a sixteen-year-old black, Yusuf Hawkins, by a band of young whites in the Italian-American Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn. September 2nd was the date of the annual West Indian-American Day parade, also in Brooklyn, which is the city's largest parade—it is really more like a carnival, many of whose participants start preparing their costumes a year ahead—and would be attended by a million people. This jubilant affair is always watched by the police for potential trouble, since its route goes along Eastern Parkway, past the headquarters of the Lubavitcher sect of the Chassidim. Each year, the Lubavitchers unsuccessfully petition to have the parade route changed. Six days later would begin the period when the Chassidim would be demanding special city services, for their High Holy Days. On September 11th, the public schools would open for nearly a million students; this year, eighty per cent are nonwhite, while (a bitter point among many blacks and Latinos) the teachers and principals continue to be predominantly white, often Jewish.

The day after the schools opened would be the day of the City Council primary election. In accordance with the new city charter, the council is to expand from thirty-five members to fifty-one, the goal being fairer representation of the city's nonwhites, who now make up over half the population; there are only six blacks and three Hispanics on the present council. In

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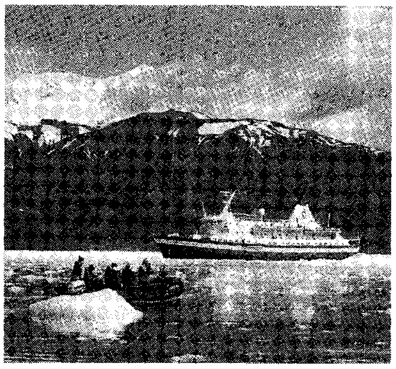
the judgment of many local Hispanics, the Mayor's delegates to the districting commission favored the interests of his fellow-blacks—insuring that Latino New Yorkers, who are almost as numerous as blacks, would get the short end of the stick. "LA GRAN ESTAFA" ("The Great Fraud") proclaimed a huge headline on the front page of the Latino daily *El Diario* after the final district lines were published.

All these racial confrontations, potential and real, received far less attention than they otherwise would have, because of what happened in Crown Heights on the night of August 19th. At about eight-twenty, Gavin Cato, the son of a Guyanese immigrant, was killed and his seven-year-old cousin Angela was injured in an accident in which a car went out of control and mounted the sidewalk. Two hundred and two people were killed by cars in Brooklyn last year. The death of a child causes terrible anger; there is no doubt that in this case the anger was particularly fierce because the car was part of the entourage of the Lubavitcher Grand Rebbe—the eighty-nine-year-old supreme Lubavitcher leader, who many sect members believe will reveal to them the Messiah or is perhaps the Messiah himself. He had made his weekly trip to a Queens cemetery to visit the grave of his wife and that of his predecessor as Grand Rebbe. His black Cadillac was preceded by its usual escort, a city police car containing two policemen from the Seventy-first Precinct, in Crown Heights. The third car, which killed the child, was driven by twenty-two-year-old Yosef Lifsh, who, like two men in the car with him, wore a beard and the distinctive long black coat and black felt hat that to many blacks in the neighborhood are instant reminders of the preferential treatment that they believe Chassidim receive from local government. The reaction in the streets was immediate and violent. Lifsh, who was beaten, was removed from the scene on police orders for his own safety. Three hours later, a band of teen-age blacks—by some accounts, shouting "Kill the Jew!"—surrounded and stabbed a young Chassid named Yankel Rosenbaum, a visitor from Australia here to study the Holocaust. The police moved swiftly, chasing down two of the teen-agers and bringing them back to the crime scene, where Rosenbaum was being put in an ambulance. One of the blacks, a sixteen-year-old named Lemerick Nelson, Jr., had on him, according to police, a bloodstained knife and three bloodstained dollar bills. Rosenbaum asked Nelson, "Why did you stab me? It was twenty to one. No fair." He died a few hours later.

ALTHOUGH one of the two Crown Heights deaths that night was an accident and the other was murder, in the days that followed the focus was to an extraordinary degree on the accident. One reason was that the city's celebrated black activists, who moved in within hours to lead protest marches and serve as spokesmen for the demonstrators, had a natural interest in not letting attention be diverted to a tragic parallel: just as whites in Bensonhurst had killed Yusuf Hawkins only because of the color of his skin, blacks had stabbed Yankel Rosenbaum to death for no other reason than that his style of dress identified him as a Chassid. Young blacks' cries of "Heil Hitler!" outside Lubavitcher headquarters seemed especially lunatic to those who knew that the only ethnic group whose members Hitler regarded as less human than the Jews was blacks; there was a clear sense, however, that, on the long list of school subjects the rampagers would have had no use for, history would be right up there. Meanwhile, inside Lubavitcher headquarters, even though Rosenbaum was one of their own, many of the rabbis seemed preoccupied by the need to prove that the motorcade of the Grand Rebbe had been without fault in the episode, and also preoccupied—indeed, almost transfixed—by the implications of the presence on the scene of the Rebbe himself.

In a review last month of a novel, "This Land Was Ours," about life in the Great Plains before America became an urban nation, George Will wrote that, simply put, America "was born on the farm and moved to town, leaving behind the Jeffersonian vision"—a move that he seemed to consider a pity. This version of the nation's history leaves little room for a place such as Crown Heights, which is also America. Of its two hundred and eleven thousand residents, over eighty per cent are black, and eighty per cent of these are estimated to be immigrants from the Caribbean—a term that is loosely used to include such nearby countries as Guyana. Of the other residents, nearly ten per cent are



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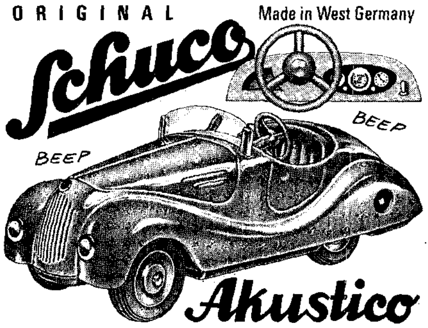

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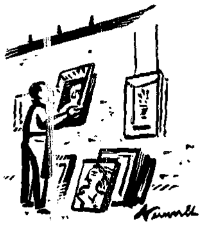
Chassidim. The Caribbean flood began during the late nineteen-fifties and early sixties, with the immigrants often replacing middle-class non-Chassidic Jews who were moving out to Queens and the suburbs. Though there are now, by some estimates, a million Caribbean-Americans in this city (three-quarters of them in Brooklyn), for a long time most of them did not bother to vote—or could not do so, not being citizens. Though they now nearly outnumber American-born blacks here, they are represented by no elected official. This situation has begun to change: there were several West Indian candidates in this month's City Council primary, including Colin Moore, who was born in Guyana, and is now a lawyer for the Cato family.



Some visitors to Crown Heights during and just after the rioting found in many areas something quite different from the image of an urban slum often associated with central Brooklyn. The Caribbean blacks in many cases live side by side with Chassidim in well-kept brownstones on tree-lined streets. Though the Caribbeans complain as loudly as most other blacks about what they see as the preferential treatment the Chassidim get from City Hall, their biggest problem is that the Lubavitchers—because they want to be as close as possible to the Grand Rebbe, are not permitted to ride in automobiles on the Sabbath, and have very large families (as many as twelve or fourteen children)—steadily harass their Caribbean neighbors to sell their houses. The Lubavitchers and many others who observed the Crown Heights troubles kept complaining—just as whites used to complain in the South in the nineteen-sixties—that most of the disturbances were caused by outside agitators, and in many cases they were right about that. Colin Moore, for example, is not from Crown Heights but from East Flatbush. The belief that many of the rock-throwing and other violent-minded blacks were also outsiders was reinforced when it turned out that Lemerick Nelson, indicted for the stabbing of Yankel Rosenbaum, was from East Flatbush. The Reverend Al Sharpton, now an international media star, who was on the march in Crown Heights nearly every night, shouting "No justice, no peace!" ("They don't want peace, they want quiet," he said of the city government—and there was something to that, too), used to live in Brooklyn's Prospect Heights section but last year moved to New Jersey. The Reverend Herbert Daughtry, who was to go on Dinkins' South African junket, also lives in New Jersey, and his church is in Brooklyn Heights. In the early days of the administration of Edward Koch, Dinkins' predecessor, Daughtry marched across the Brooklyn Bridge every week or so, leading a band of followers who shouted "All fired up! Can't take no more!" in an effort, sometimes successful, to disrupt whatever was going on at City Hall. Late in the eighties, however, as Sharpton became noisier and more vocal, Daughtry quieted down. He was one of the invited guests at Dinkins' inauguration, and later, moving around City Hall, he smiled sheepishly when reporters accused him of having allowed himself to be co-opted into a statesman. With the trouble in Crown Heights, however, he was back in the streets, arm in arm with Sharpton.

The outsider in Crown Heights who went furthest back on the local black-militant scene was Sonny Carson. At a reunion of Lindsay-administration figures last year, the partygoers recalled with what sounded very like nostalgia a turbulent night in the sixties when a black child was killed in the Bushwick section of Brooklyn and Lindsay went out to settle down an angry crowd, which had been stirred up by an agitator named Sonny Carson. For a time in 1989, Carson was a campaign worker for Dinkins. At a press conference held to rebut charges that he was anti-Semitic, he said, "I don't just hate Jews. I hate all white people." Before the Caribbean parade this month, when the Mayor's people were working desperately to insure that it would be a peaceful event, Sharpton said he would do his best to bring this about. Carson said he didn't see why he had to promise there would be no violence, adding, "Are the Chassidim promising to be peaceful?" The parade nevertheless went well, the turnout was the largest ever, and there were no ugly incidents. Carson announced that he was depressed and would soon be leaving town. Immediately, New Yorkers began to tele-

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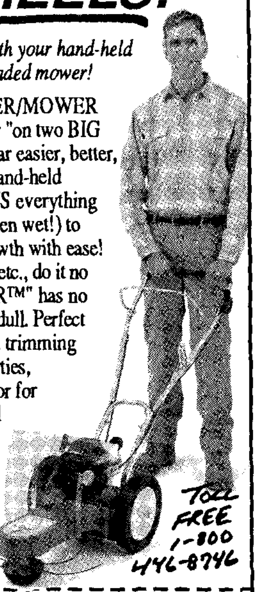

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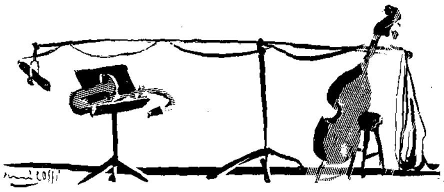
New Yorkers’ impression that they were living in an old rerun was reinforced when Barry Slotnick entered the case, as the lawyer not only for the Lubavitcher community but for Yosef Lifsh, the driver of the car. In the mid-nineteen-eighties, Slotnick was a regular on the front pages as the attorney for Bernhard Goetz, the subway gunman. Despite the impression conveyed by some Chassidic commentators on the violence in Crown Heights, not all interracial crime in Brooklyn is committed by blacks. A few years back, Slotnick defended two young Chassidic men for the attempted murder of a black teen-ager. Taking advantage of the fact that to most New Yorkers all Chassidim look alike—a circumstance that helped end the life of Yankel Rosenbaum—Slotnick filled the courtroom with other young Chassidim, wearing the traditional garb, and the judge allowed them to mingle with the defendants. No witness was able to pick out the alleged perpetrators, and the jury, which was predominantly black, voted to acquit. Partly for this achievement, Slotnick received *American Lawyer’s* annual award for the best performance by an attorney in the criminal field. In defending his latest client to the press, Slotnick dwelt on the accidental nature of accidents and also on the high moral character and stability of the Lubavitchers.

The Lubavitcher branch of the Chassidim, a dissident Orthodox Jewish group founded in Eastern Europe in the mid-eighteenth century, moved to Crown Heights in 1940. Joseph Schneerson, then their Grand Rebbe, had organized a mass migration out of Poland. In 1969, at the height of the era of middle-class white flight from central Brooklyn, Menachem Schneerson, who succeeded him as Grand Rebbe, ordered the Lubavitchers to stay where they were; they now constitute virtually the entire white population of Crown Heights. Under his leadership, the Lubavitchers caught on to the importance of registering and voting, and using the political process to get much of what they wanted from the city government: the closing off of streets for the Sabbath, police protection, and, especially, preference in the distribution of new and about-to-be-rehabilitated housing—structures that, having been abandoned by their owners, had fallen into city hands. This special treatment has dwindled in recent years (at about the time the supply of housing ran out, some black leaders complain) as blacks in the neighborhood have become more adept at the political game. Crown Heights’ delegate to Congress, Major Owens, is black, and so are its City Council member, Mary Pinkett, who won her primary on September 12th, and its state assemblyman, Clarence Norman, Jr., who is also the Democratic boss of Brooklyn, and is the first black to hold that office. However, some special considerations continue to be given to the Chassidim, such as the police escort for the Rebbe’s weekly trips to the cemetery. The fact that the death of Gavin Cato was associated with this visible symbol of indulgence helped fuel the explosions of violence last month.

Some Lubavitchers, however, saw the accident from a quite different point of view—as possibly the ultimate test devised by Heavenly forces preceding Menachem Schneerson’s revelation that he was the Messiah. (The belief that he is the supreme leader is so strong that the Lubavitchers have built a replica of their Brooklyn headquarters, at 770 Eastern Parkway, on a plot of land between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, so that he will feel at home when he moves in there to rule as the Messiah.) In an article late last month in the *Jewish Week*, the writer Jonathan Mark reported that the sense that this revelation is imminent has been supported by the Grand Rebbe’s recent speeches, in which he has suggested that the announcement may occur soon, possibly on the roof of 770. Many Lubavitchers approached this month’s High Holy Days with special excitement, on the theory that it might happen then. The conviction that the accident was a significant signal was strengthened, according to Mark, by the fact that it took place on August 19th, the same day that a coup was under way in the Soviet Union and Hurricane Bob “was wreaking havoc along the Atlantic Coast.” And here, Mark wrote, “out of the rebbe’s own entourage, a racial hurricane was forming around the smashed body of Gavin Cato.” A few days after the accident, the spokesman for the Lubavitcher community was satisfied enough with the way things were going to announce, “If this is a test, we have passed it. We have responded to the most brutal test in the most noble way possible.”



For Mayor Dinkins the worst night of the Crown Heights riots was August 21st, when he went there after announcing to City Hall reporters that he would be walking the neighborhood streets, the plan—certainly the hope—being that the rioters would be calmed by his presence. Instead, as he stood in the doorway of the Cato family’s building he had to dodge bottles and rocks thrown at him by young blacks shouting “Traitor! Traitor!” “His bravery was hard not to admire,” said an editorial in the *Post*, where admiring words for the Mayor are relatively rare. On the advice of police, he was hustled into his car. Earlier that day, a few blocks away, young blacks—Brooklyn’s *intifada*—had been throwing rocks and chunks of cement at the Lubavitcher headquarters, and a band of young Lubavitchers, ranged protectively in front of the building, had thrown rocks back at them. Meanwhile, members of the Jewish Defense Organization—a spinoff of Rabbi Meier Kahane’s Jewish Defense League, which was founded in Brooklyn in the nineteen-sixties—roved through Crown Heights, taking part in the action, and saying of the blacks, “The only thing those people understand is violence.” As in a made-for-television movie, flames from torched cars, including police cars, leaped high and sirens wailed as the arrested were rushed off to precinct houses and the injured, including many policemen, were delivered to hospitals.

The word “rage” was especially prevalent in the tabloids’ front-page headlines: “GRIEF & RAGE,” “PUBLIC RAGE,” “STREETS OF RAGE.” Phil Caruso, the head of the Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association, announced on August 22nd that his members’ lives were being endangered because they were under “restraint” not to use their weapons, despite the violence around them. Although Dinkins criticized Caruso’s complaint as “not at all useful,” he announced that “we are not going to permit thugs to take over our city"—a signal that the police, who he did not concede had been shackled, would now be unshackled. Praise for this move was almost drowned out by complaints that he should have moved sooner. There were other responses as well. "I heard a nasty rumor that the police commissioner is prepared to take out all of us," Sonny Carson said, and he urged "all you young people"—that is, young blacks—"to do what you've got to do and keep on doing it." From August 22nd until August 26th, the day of Gavin Cato's funeral, as many as two thousand police were on duty in Crown Heights each night. The police-overtime cost for that area for the period from August 20th to September 2nd was six million three hundred thousand dollars; the crisis of violence in the streets diminished, but the budget crisis worsened.

The Mayor was received respectfully when he spoke at the Cato funeral, but by far the most enthusiastic reception was given to Sharpton, who said that the little boy's death was the result not of an automobile accident nvolving a car driven by one of the loof Lubavitchers but of "the social ccident of apartheid." Also well reeived at the funeral was Daughtry, who warned that if the deaths of Gavin Cato and other blacks went unpunshed the result would be "the fire next ime"—invoking words from the spiriual in which the Lord warns Noah, "No more water, the fire next time." The fire next time could consume the ity, Daughtry said.

At City Hall, the Mayor complained hat reporters kept asking him why he didn't denounce Sharpton and comany and then demanding to know whether he had been reaching out to hem enough. "I'd like to know, do ou want me to denounce them just efore or just after I sit to meet with hem?" Dinkins said. A sense that he ould do nothing right had caused he temper of the Mayor, formerly elebrated for his civility, to be so short hat he began requesting reporters to top using the word "testy" in describng his responses to questions. He also made it clear that he was not prepared o settle for the option offered by one eporter, "churlish." During much of is first year in office, Dinkins had ften spoken at length about the gorgeous mosaic" of racial and ethnic roups in the city he is in charge . After the eruption in Crown Heights,

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the *Daily News* warned editorially, "Building bridges across the ethnic divide in New York is infinitely more complicated than talking up the 'gorgeous mosaic.'" On the same day, a headline in *Newsday* read "DINKINS' MOSAIC CRUMBLES." The *Jewish Press*, in its August 31st issue, urged the Mayor to resign. In its September 6th issue, its editorial demanded that he be recalled—a move that only Dinkins' friend Governor Mario Cuomo has the power to make. "Crown Heights was the last straw," the *Jewish Press* said. From another quarter, the message of the Reverend Calvin Butts, the pastor of Harlem's Abyssinian Baptist Church, was less of a clarion call, but it sounded an alarm. He said he was only stating the obvious when he pointed out that "the Mayor is not enjoying the respect or support of the grass roots in terms of the African-American community," and that, he said, "does not bode well for his future."

Late on the afternoon of September 5th, a Brooklyn grand jury handed up a verdict declining to indict the driver of the car that killed young Cato. A spokesman for District Attorney Charles Hynes noted that the grand jury was fifty per cent African-American, thirty-six per cent white, and fourteen per cent Latino. One cry of the black marchers in Crown Heights during the previous weeks had been "No arrest, no rest!" Many blacks in the city—and many New Yorkers who were not black—were convinced that if the driver had been black he would have been jailed at once. In this state, however, the driver of a car involved in a fatal accident is indicted only under "the rule of two"; that is, criminal negligence is charged only if the putative defendant is held to have been guilty of two conditions that could qualify as reckless—running a red light and speeding, say. The testimony on whether Lifsh had run a red light was not decisive, and the alleged rate of speed varied according to whether the experts were working for the D.A.'s office or for Slotnick. After the "no true bill" judgment by the grand jury, Hynes pointed out that in the twenty-two fatal Brooklyn car accidents last year that resembled the one on August 19th there had been no indictments of the drivers, of whom ten were black, nine white, two Latino, and one Arabic. Yosef Lifsh was out of the city within hours. Cato's father said he was "terribly angry." His lawyer called for a congressional investigation of the case. The Reverend Al Sharpton said that he and others would be marching again in Crown Heights. First, however, he planned to march on Hynes' summer home, in Breezy Point, Queens. At City Hall, Dinkins reminded New Yorkers—even those who were unhappy with the verdict—that they lived in a society of laws. The police were out in force again that night in Crown Heights, braced for more trouble, but the streets were quiet. "We've got to take a deep breath and get through this," Dinkins said.

By the following day, it was clear that, in the natural progression of things, the next challenge the city would have to get through was dealing with the killing of Yankel Rosenbaum. In Washington, New York's Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan called the stabbing "a lynching" that posed the same danger to New York as the Ku Klux Klan once had to the South. Dinkins, asked if he agreed, said that young Rosenbaum's death had indeed been a lynching. For taking this position, he was denounced by Sharpton, by Carson, and by another black militant, Elombe Brath, who complained that the Mayor "does not seem to distinguish premeditated murder from retaliatory murder."

Unofficial returns in the September 12th primary for the new City Council indicated that the number of black and Latino council members would more than double, to at least twenty. However, C. Vernon Mason, Sharpton's longtime cohort, who was prominent among the marchers in Crown Heights, came in third in District 7, in northern Manhattan. The area's member of the House of Representatives, Charles Rangel, who is the most powerful black in Congress, had endorsed not Mason but his victorious opponent, the incumbent, Stanley Michels, who is Jewish. And in Brooklyn's East Flatbush district, which is more than seventy-five per cent black, Colin Moore, another familiar on the Crown Heights scene, lost decisively to the incumbent council member, Susan Alter, an Orthodox Jew who is married to a rabbi.

—ANDY LOGAN

# BOOKS

## *Long Day's Journey Into Light*

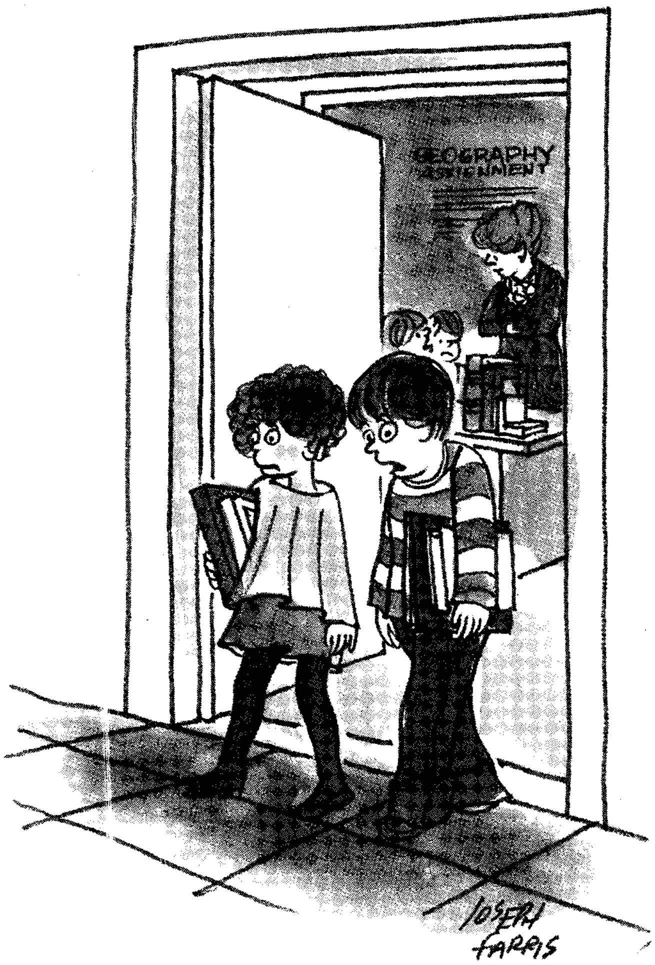
THE handicap was perfection. A man must choose between perfection of the life and perfection of the work. So taught William Butler Yeats. One simply cannot achieve both. Common sense and the dark gods won't allow it. But Goethe achieved perfection of both. The bare facts have an outrageous splendor. The Weimar edition of his works runs to a hundred and forty-three volumes, and they include some of the world's masterpieces of lyric poetry, drama, prose fiction, travel writing, autobiography. Goethe's letters are numbered in the thousands, and there is not much deadwood among them. The author of "Werther," of "Faust," of the "Roman Elegies" and the "West-Eastern Divan" is also a formidable botanist and mineralogist, and a thinker and experimenter in morphology who, like Erasmus Darwin, is important in the run-up to doctrines of the evolution of species. His late conversations with his amanuensis Eckermann rank with those of Boswell's Johnson. His journals of the disastrous Prussian campaign against revolutionary France glow as on the day they were written. Almost nothing in that mercurial, seductive, self-dramatizing, magisterial voice has dimmed.

The poetry alone spans seventy-five years of a life sovereignly led, brimful of the charged economies of supreme largesse. Nearly three thousand drawings, many of high charm and incisiveness, tell of daily observation translated into mastered form. The villa Goethe built, the palace he restored, and the park he landscaped can be visited today. A European celebrity at twenty-five, he became an imperial baron and privy councillor, and drafted educational reforms, plans for the development of agriculture and of mining, administrative memoranda and analyses that fill ample tomes. Insistently, he challenged Newton's theory of colors in a little-read treatise that is one of the keys to Goethe's life vision. His esoteric writings, with their alchemical, cabalistic, and Masonic interests, retain some of their secrets. (They fascinated Jung.) But his fables and jingles have become children's classics and sound in the echo chamber of German consciousness. As his career, long known as "Olympian," drew to a close, Goethe knew that he embodied a whole culture, an entire epoch of European being. It was a long day's journey into light—shared, Goethe sensed, with only one contemporary. Napoleon returned the compliment.

Goethe's life and works have been the object of almost as many studies—comprehensive, selective, monographic—as those of Shakespeare, and immeasurably more is known about the author of "Faust" than about the begetter of "Hamlet." We have had since 1949 at least five full-scale biographical-cultural portrayals. They range from traditional literary history to psychoanalytic readings, from East German interpretations, founded on Marxist historicism, to subtly poised attempts to represent Goethe's universal presence in the terms that he himself set out when proclaiming that all his numbingly diverse productions "are but fragments of one great confession."

No stone in the mosaic has gone unexamined. Reverting incessantly to Goethe, such modern masters as Thomas Mann, André Gide, and W. H. Auden not only sought to illuminate his talismanic pressure on their own writings but explicitly played on Goethean motifs. Mann, in particular, made Goethe's creations the substantive source of some of his greatest achievements, such as "Lotte in Weimar" and "Doktor Faustus," and consciously patterned his private and public life after that of his predecessor. Through Emerson, Goethe's vitalism—his almost unsettling gusto in the face of history, in the face of the profusion of fauna and flora—entered American transcendentalism and nineteenth-century sensibility. There are moments in Walt Whitman's eros of the daily world which, obliquely but unmistakably, reflect Goethe's tidal advance on life. And Goethe's erotic poetry—the very late, almost Yeatsian surge of sensuality, of ecstatic sexual need and imagining in the white-haired "public man"—has recently elicited much critical attention.

Given Karl Otto Conrady's two-volume "Goethe," completed in 1985, and Curt Hohoff's biography, published four years later, the question fairly arises: Is there the need, even the receptive space for yet another biography *in extenso*, one whose first volume comprises more than eight hundred pages and breaks off when Goethe has not reached



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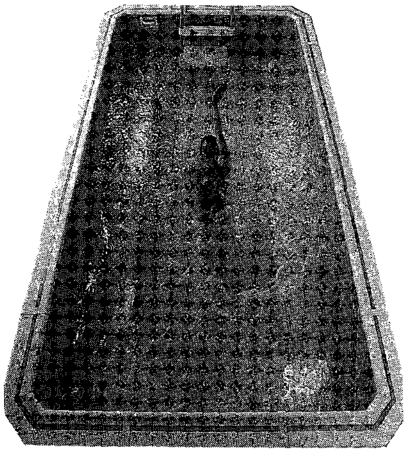

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the halfway point in his destiny? The answer is an emphatic yes. Nicholas Boyle's "Goethe: The Poet and the Age" (Oxford; $37.50) not only is the best biography of Goethe in English but will offer even German readers a major insight into its inexhaustible theme. Such is the urgent richness of information conveyed by Dr. Boyle, a lecturer in German at Cambridge University—such is the intimate knit between the narrative of Goethe's progress and the critical exposition of his productions—that the prose is sometimes clotted and the paragraphs inordinate. But these are passing blemishes in a work whose lucid judgments, whose recapture of the complicated eighteenth-century background and climate of sentiment, whose ardent sanity make it a ranking achievement in modern literary-historical scholarship and criticism. Weighty as it is, and exigent of attention to detail and nuance, this is nonetheless a book difficult to put down. It tells its great tale superbly.

In one sense, Goethe was a child prodigy. Born in 1749, and taught essentially at home and spurred on by an ambitious father, he more or less mastered half a dozen languages in early boyhood, and had perfected a conventional but effective style in verse composition by the age of twelve. His Biblical prose epic on the myth of Joseph and an epistolary novel conceived in six languages date from early adolescence. Piano and drawing were at his fingertips. But in another sense—one that Goethe himself has taught us to intuit—his development was full of the mysterious indirections and seeming detours that mark the gradual unfolding of an organic whole. He was an undistinguished law student. An opaque swerve from the pietist faith of his upbringing and the unresolved pressures of sexuality on an unformed self-consciousness brought on the first of Goethe's numerous tactical "escapes": a collapse of his health during 1768-69. It was his transfer to Strasbourg in April, 1770, that triggered the first in the long garland of miracles to come. In almost Nietzschean exultation, Goethe declared, "We must not seek to *be* anything but to *become* everything." It was in Strasbourg (with Goethe's native Frankfurt and parental control comfortably out of the way) that hazard and the manifold fabric of external life became his faithful accomplices.

The point is not easy to make, but crucial: no other genius of Goethe's stature has had so much good luck in being in the right place at the right time. It is not only that a visiting theatrical troupe happened to perform the popular melodrama "Dr. Faust" in Strasbourg then; it is that Johann Gottfried Herder arrived in the city in September of that *annus mirabilis*. Publicist, linguist, anthropologist, theologian, antiquarian, and literary critic—we have lost the confident hunger of those Enlightenment polymaths—Herder read the signs of incipient creative power in his young friend. It was from Herder that Goethe derived decisive instigations: toward a radically polemical yet mutually indispensable relation between espousal of nationhood and the foundation of German national literature, on the one hand, and an omnivorous interest in world literature—ancient, "primitive," oral, revealed, modern—on the other. It was Herder who gave to Goethe the most fruitful of his insights: into the organic, almost biological genesis of language itself, and into the absolutely cardinal, instrumental relations of language to the development of national identity, of history, of philosophic and poetic discourse.

Breathless at the dizzying summit of the steeple of Strasbourg's cathedral Johann Wolfgang Goethe not only experienced a vision of European plenitude—France and Germany literally at his feet, the Rhine connecting the Alps to the flatlands of the Netherlands, whose unstable landscape was to mark the finale of "Faust: Part Two," sixty-two years thence—but arrived a some unshakable intimation of creative force. Thanks to Herder's enthusiasti tutelage, Homer and Shakespeare became for him immediacies of persona encounter and self-comparison. As did the Nordic bards, the Biblical Prophets, the Psalmist, and Ossian (on James Macpherson, a literary trickste of some inspiration, whose contrive sagas held Romantic generations spellbound). In the winter of 1771, Goeth composed his first masterpiece, th

Shakespearean-style historical drama "Götz von Berlichingen." Already, in this early, rough-edged play, the twenty-two-year-old master found turns of phrase that, almost overnight, entered German speech with the self-evidence of the proverbial.

Back in Frankfurt, restless and seeking to digest what appear to have been sketchy, unconsummated love affairs, Goethe during eight weeks of the spring of 1774 produced "Werther." Recounted a hundredfold, the history of its success continues to enthrall. It may be that only "Uncle Tom's Cabin" has had, among fictions, a comparable impact on the tenor of public and private life in a given moment of history. Bonaparte carried "Werther" in his saddlebag during his campaigns. He confessed that he would rather have been the author of "Werther" han Emperor of Europe. Dr. Boyle's analyses are exemplary in their infor-nativeness and literary tact. He points o the obvious influence of Rousseau and of European domestic sentiment-alism, to the sheer genius whereby Goethe blends the representation of virtuous pathos with the pulse and undercurrent of transgression, of eros unbound. "'Werther' became a fash-on because it was about a fashion" is an apt tag. But key elements in its overwhelming fame and dissemina-ion—two French versions within a year of publication, eight English trans-ations over the first twenty years, iterally thousands of graphic illustra-ions and porcelain figures—remain lusive to us. Reading "Werther" to-lay, we cannot but honestly ask our-elves what in this slim, intentionally nuted story of prohibited love and uicide should have made it the bre-iary of Europe and of literate Russia. We wonder at the wave of imitative uicides which came to haunt and xasperate Goethe as he labored to reak free of the radiant shadow of his recipitous glory.

From the age of twenty-four, he was indeed "Goethe." Artists, scien-sts, patrons, publishers, acquaintan-es in high places beat a path to his oor. The cutout silhouette of the author f "Götz" and "Werther" graced in-umerable walls and conservatory ables. Not many knew of the poem Prometheus," for Goethe kept it jeal-usly among his personal papers and vas not to acknowledge its authorship

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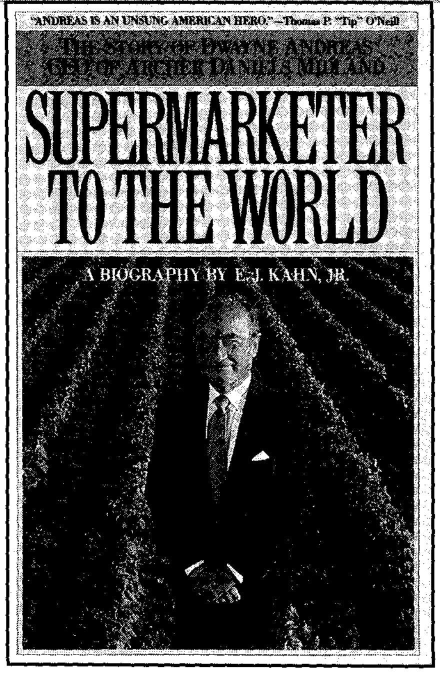
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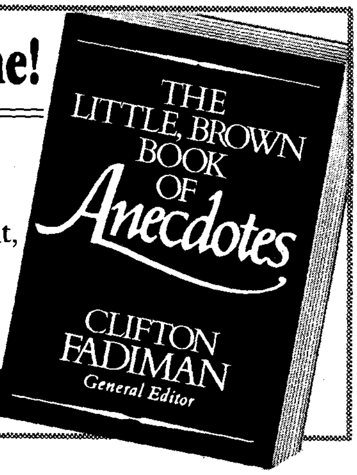

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for a long time. Only fifty-eight clipped, irregular lines long, that poem remains one of the high points of Western literature. Savagely contemptuous of official creeds, scornful of any obeisance to divine Providence, the poet affirms that salvation lies solely with his own titanic strength, with the angry fires in his heart. Neither Blake nor Marx nor Feuerbach nor Nietzsche will go further in subversive, demonic humanism. That the author of "Prometheus" is—and almost at the same time—the author of "Werther" directs us toward prodigalities of tension, of self-division within Goethe which this biography does much to elucidate but which remain, at the last, tantalizingly masked.

NOW Goethe's unfailing partner, life, intervened again. It was in December, 1774, that the young celebrity was introduced to Carl August, the seventeen-year-old heir to the Thuringian duchy of Saxe-Weimar. Carl August was to take over the actual government from his widowed mother when he attained his eighteenth birthday. Other contacts followed. A strange chemistry of bonding—Goethe would entitle his subtlest novel "Elective Affinities," with explicit reference to chemical fusion—developed between the youthful prince and the scarcely older literary star. Again, Nicholas Boyle is a scrupulous chronicler, though there are "hooked atoms" (Coleridge's phrase) of reciprocal recognition, and even affection, which elude us. Goethe was blessed with a deep-lying femininity of perception and response. His "esemplastic" faculties (I borrow again from Coleridge's vocabulary)—his ability to flow with and into the sensibility of others, his sheer charm and playful lightness of being—were of the rarest potency. Unintellectual, even coarse-grained in his assumptions of privilege and dominion, Carl August nevertheless perceived a pragmatic potential in Goethe, an unfulfilled zest for practicality and, one suspects, a social ambition and aristocratic longing that even the most resounding of literary successes could not satisfy.

Goethe hesitated. The town of Weimar was, as Boyle wittily and sharply demonstrates, a veritable hole. The town numbered approximately six thousand inhabitants, fully a quarter of whom were in one way or another employed by the ducal court. To many among Goethe's circle of admirers throughout Germany and the rest of Europe, the notion of a removal to the Saxe-Weimar civil service seemed absurd. But it appears to be one of the thoroughly unfair advantages of genius that it guesses right—that it has a dowser's art for locating the best setting for its own ripening. Goethe moved to Weimar in November, 1775. Only five years later, Privy Councillor von Goethe was the acknowledged master of the little realm: the planner of its buildings and public works, the inspector of its mines and forests, the shaper of what could be called its foreign policies in a tumultuous time, the author of a daily cornucopia of official memoranda, minutes, legislative projects. Scarcely any aspect of the economic, cultural, or political business of the ministate escaped Goethe's attention and ingenuity. Each day saw him at court or riding beside Carl August on missions of inspection. The order of an imperial barony shone on the *Geheimrat's* court dress. Yet behind closed doors and in congenial company Goethe could roll on the floor in exuberant and ribald merriment. Simply because he lived there, Weimar became one of the pivots of European fate.

If Carl August formed the apex of the triangular world that Goethe mapped for himself at Weimar, it was Charlotte von Stein, wife of the Duke's chief equerry, who provided the base. During the first ten years of his career in the duchy, Goethe saw Frau von Stein almost daily. Letters, *billets*, humorous or tender messages flowed back and forth. Very few personal relations in literary and intellectual history have been more sifted by posterity. Yet, again, the paradox obtains we seem to know everything withou having any confident insight into the crux. In part, the reason may simply be that the noble lady reclaimed and destroyed her own end of the correspondence when Goethe broke with her, in 1789. But even if we possessed this material the heart of the matter might well remain unclear. Like othe scholars and would-be witnesses before him, Dr. Boyle regards the affai as platonic. What bound the meteoric young favorite and universal agent to an older woman of evident finesse laughter, and warmth would appear to have been a characteristic instinct fo

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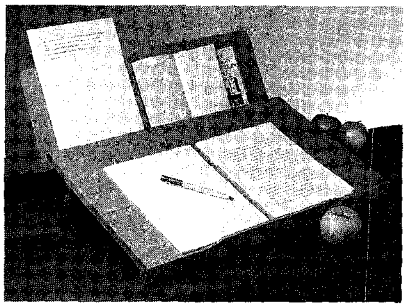

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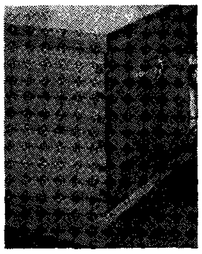

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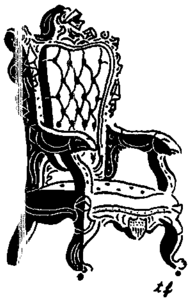
growth. It was in Charlotte von Stein's intimacy that Goethe cultivated—via confessional trust, playfulness (which may have had its erotic edge), and shared reflection (they read much together)—latent provinces of his personality. Goethe's drama of poet and princes, "Torquato Tasso," enacts, in a vein both declaratory and confidential, the tensed unfolding, the risks, the rush of spirit and nerves which he must have experienced with Frau von Stein in the tolerant but nevertheless watchful and potentially malignant ambience of the Weimar court.



By the winter of 1785, this ambience weighed on the ennobled, ubiquitous factotum. It was not only the Duke's "absentee absolutism" (in Boyle's apt phrase) that irritated Goethe. It was the central fact that the Weimar decade had produced little literary fruit. There were immortal flashes. On September 6, 1780, during a tour in the Thuringian Forest, Goethe at sunset inscribed on the wall of a charcoal burner's hut what remains the most nearly perfect and deeply admired lyric in the German language: "Über allen Gipfeln"—eight lines of a sort of haiku of crepuscular light and calm which have come close to seeing Germany through its infernal history. But most of the intended dramas and longer poetic texts remained drafts, outline sketches, or, as in the case of "Faust," unfinished manuscripts. Many who had early acclaimed Goethe's genius wondered. Goethe was graciously dispensed from his daily official charges. Henceforth, Weimar's luminary would attend and direct only signal sessions of the privy council. The Duke would no longer demand his constant attendance on visits to his fief and on ceremonial occasions. But even under this lightened yoke Goethe smoldered.

How many times the tale has been spun of his flight from Weimar, but never more absorbingly than by this latest recorder. Goethe concealed every move. He kept from Charlotte von Stein, from the Duke, from his other intimates his resolve and his adroit preparations. He left Weimar on July 24, 1786, ostensibly for a brief summer repose. After that, he managed to vanish, almost literally, from the map. An instinct as old as that of the Norsemen, of the medieval German emperors—a necessity, libidinal in its shadowy force—drove him south. Across the Alps, into the Po Valley, into the bright air of vine and lemon blossoms. During the final stages of the voyage, Goethe's excitement was such that he scarcely stopped to sleep. The ancient cry out of northern Europe—"Rome! Rome!"—kept him awake. In late October, the grimed wheels of his coach clattered through the gates of the city.

Goethe's recollections, drawings, and lyrics, together with the reports set down in the journals and epistles of the diplomats, scholars, artists, fellow-travellers whom he met with, allow us to follow, almost day by day, the seasons of noon which now began. His creative, sensuous, intellectual energies, constrained and compacted during the Weimar decade, surged. The filaments of volcanic outpouring which Goethe later observed on Mt. Vesuvius became an image of his own energy. He plunged systematically into classical archeology; he visited the monuments of Italian medieval and Renaissance art and architecture; he botanized; he investigated the geology of the many different landscapes through which he travelled by coach, on horse- or muleback, on foot; he read Virgil, Catullus, Horace, Ovid in their native setting. By mid-December, "Iphigenia," perhaps the most disciplined and most musical of Goethe's masterpieces—a variation on Sophoclean and Euripidean motifs which is at the same time fiercely modern in its psychology—was completed. Goethe's letters to his royal master and to Frau von Stein in Weimar, with their apologetic, courtly defense of his secret departure, hardly conceal the exultation that filled him.

Leaving Rome for Naples and Sicily in February, 1787, Goethe sought out the very roots, Hellenic and Roman, Christian and Islamic, of the European psyche. It was during this immersion in the white light, in the scents and sounds of the Apollonian south, that he sketched and began a play about Odysseus' encounter with Nausicaa in Homer's epic. The "myriad-minded" wanderer and monarch of cunning is rescued by the princely child of his host. Even reticent Homer hints at the spell that he exercises upon her. But he must away, homeward to Ithaca. Unquestionably,

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—Robert Olmstead

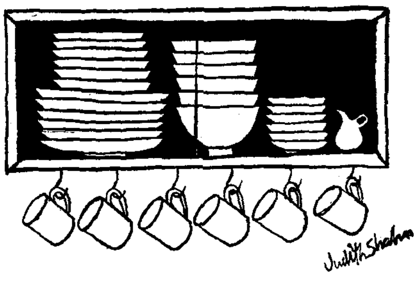
Published by Knopf

Goethe knew of those Hellenistic addenda to the Odyssey in which Nausicaa becomes the bride of Odysseus' son. Dr. Boyle finely analyzes both the glowing fragment that Goethe has left us and the possible motives for his not completing the project. Clearly, the sexual tautness within him, his intimations of middle age, the story's symbolic reversal of his own intimacy with an older woman were, amid the riot of the senses offered by Sicily, simultaneously palpable and unresolved. Goethe was back in Rome in June. His drama of heroic insurgence and death, "Egmont" (Beethoven would compose the incidental music), was ready in September. Goethe's being was at fever pitch.

At some point during the prelude to the carnival in January, 1788—he was now thirty-eight—Goethe entered on what Nicholas Boyle judges to be his first sexually fulfilled relationship. Providence would have it that the young woman's name was Faustina. My own supposition (and it can be no more) is that Goethe, together with a handful of absolutely supreme begetters in Western thought and art—this is to say, in company with Plato, with Shakespeare, with Michelangelo, with Leonardo, possibly with Beethoven—could focus on his perceptions and productions a bisexuality more or less natural to all of us but in these stellar presences more concentrated, more united in division. If Faustina Antonini was indeed the first woman he fully possessed, it was because at that same time he could overcome the inhibitions of the homoerotic, of the "eternal feminine," in himself. There is not much in world literature—other than the "Song of Songs," Shakespeare's sonnets and those of Michelangelo, and certain pages in Proust and in Joyce's construction of Molly Bloom—that can be compared to the erotic totality of Goethe's "Roman Elegies." It is not merely between the lines but inside their vibrant allusiveness that we learn of Goethe's auroral experiencing of sexuality as if he were indeed a woman, and of his afternoon and evening penetration of woman in the relaxed pride of virility. We know now that the immense backs of feminine figures sculptured by Michelangelo for the Medici Chapel are those of heroic men. Exactly the same "duplicity"—a duplicity that arrives at plenitude and totality—inhabits Goethe's autobiographical elegies. It may be that only this equilibrium of wholeness—this rare capacity to be, at the deepest psychosomatic levels, both man and woman—makes possible Plato's "Symposium," Shakespeare's Cordelia, Cleopatra, Hermione, Leonardo's androgynous smiles. It was in Rome that Goethe came to be possessed by and to possess creatively this primordial indifference.

Pressures from Weimar mounted. Baron von Goethe drove a hard bargain. He would return on financial terms, under dispensations from officious duty, of the kind that would henceforth give his works of literature and of science, of dramaturgy and of fine arts secure priority. He left Rome on April 24, 1788, both desolate and braced. June 18th found him back in Weimar. As before, Providence waited upon him as it has on few other mortals. Walking in the park, Goethe less than a month later met the spirited, commonsensical, robust Christiana Vulpius. A twenty-three-year-old, she was Goethe's inferior both socially and culturally, but she understood his needs and was prepared to satisfy them straightforwardly. Christiana was to become Goethe's often despised, unglamorous, but finally indispensable companion and wife. (She bore him a son on Christmas Day, 1789.) The break with von Stein was ugly. Boyle cites as one of the most terrible letters ever written by one lover to another Goethe's farewell message of June, 1789. But by that time a partner in genius worthy of Goethe's own had appeared on the horizon. Before long, Schiller would come to Weimar. In France, moreover, revolution had, in Goethe's words, begun to alter the very texture of time and of human self-awareness. Tremendous years lay ahead.

AT the start, I ventured the notion of perfection as handicap, as inhibiting to others. The Anglo-American view has not warmed to Goethe since the Victorian age—since the passionate reception given by George Eliot, by Carlyle, by Emerson to one whose range of accomplishment and sensibility was, after Dante's and Shakespeare's, matchless. T. S. Eliot's silliness about Goethe is representative. It is as if the Anglo-Saxon temper wanted roughage in the grain of creation. Dr. Boyle, consciously or not, aims to satisfy this bias. Hence his subtitle: "The Poetry of Desire." The young and middle-aged Goethe whom he so persuasively details is an impatient, often highly wrought and frustrated individual. Boyle lays stress on the episodes of psychosomatic illness, of evasion, of blocked creativity. He investigates the successive abstentions from fulfilled love, from the realization of manifest passion, that punctuated Goethe's early manhood (his relationships with Friederike Brion; with Charlotte Buff; and with Lili Schönemann, to whom Goethe was formally engaged). He focusses attention more searchingly than most previous biographers have done on Goethe's possibly labored, at moments self-tormenting emancipation from the religious doctrines and practices of his familial background. Beautifully, this theme of "storm and stress" is both implicit in and resolved by the famous Tischbein drawing on the back of the book jacket. Goethe is portrayed from the rear, leaning out the window of his Rome apartment. There is a poised wistfulness in the figure, but also a delicate turn toward final liberation. Through that Keatsian "casement" (how profoundly Rome figured in both poets' lives) Goethe seems to be glimpsing not only "faery lands forlorn" but a world to conquer—solid, manifold, ripening to his harvest. Exactly as Boyle does, this acute sketch tells of a journey longer, more uncertain than outward triumphs would lead one to suppose.



The problem is not, however, solely one of Anglo-American suspicion in the face of marmoreal, sanctified monumentality. Much of Goethe's transcendent lyric poetry and dramatic verse does not translate well. Himself a translator from twenty-seven tongues, Goethe made of his German an instrument at once deep-rooted in the sometimes brutal, self-consciously Teutonic strata of medieval and Lutheran idioms and uniquely permeable to the European classical inheritance and the urbanities of the Enlightenment. The kaleidoscopic virtuosity of Goethe's linguistic control—of the instantaneous shifts between bawdy populism and Orphic elevation, between jingle and epic, between the off-the-cuff prose of his letters, memoirs, and conversations and the arcane weave of "Elective Affinities"—is inevitably resistant to translation. Nor is it altogether easy for Anglo-Saxon empiricism to cope with Goethe's touches of mysticism or numerology, or, most obviously, with his insistent, voluminous, and erroneous polemics against Newton.

But when all this is said there does remain, even for the German reader (particularly today), a chill. It is not only that Privy Councillor von Goethe's genius, universality, and good fortune overwhelm (and not merely common folk, for even Beethoven growled). It s that Goethe, after his homecoming rom Italy, and the appearance of the irst of numerous successive collections of his more and more famous works, began distancing himself from the umult and torments of everyday humanity. His Olympian dictum "Rather njustice than disorder" freezes. It cut him off, deliberately, not only from the questing, Promethean turbulence of his earlier self but from the strivings and political-social despair of some of he most inspired of his less fortunate ontemporaries. Goethe's treatment of Kleist, a psychologically doomed but antastically inventive dramatist and hallenger, does not make pretty readng. Nor does his personal and bureauratic anathema on Fichte, a philosoher of the very first rank but one ubversive in his interrogations of Deism nd of princely or ducal hegemonies. t was as if Goethe had become a hrine not only to Europe—the pilrimage to Weimar, the attempts to atch sight of the immortal were an nternational institution—but also to imself. The most self-observant o oets came to conceive of his augus elf as a third person. (Irreveren nalogies with de Gaulle come to mind.) The American reflex is one that would emocratize eternity. It consorts awkwardly with Goethe.

But if Nicholas Boyle's exemplary resentation does not bring new readrs to Goethe's dramas, lyric poems, legies, fiction, autobiography, and rawings, the loss will be theirs. So far s Europe goes—it is Great Britain that is being tested in this regard—the active reception and enlistment of Goethe is very nearly a password. If a more or less united Europe is to have rightness of spirit, it will draw directly on Goethe's vital precedent. The American case is farther from immediacy. It is Gounod's "Faust," not Goethe's, that inhabits our recognitions. Not the least of Nicholas Boyle's merits is to have reopened the question. He will have to argue it more demandingly in his second volume.

—GEORGE STEINER

## BRIEFLY NOTED

### FICTION

CABIN FEVER, by Elizabeth Jolley (HarperCollins; $19.95). Ms. Jolley's thirteenth book is both a self-contained novel and a sequel to "My Father's Moon," where we left the young English nurse Vera Wright at the end of the Second World War, pregnant by a married doctor. Now Vera is four decades older and wiser, and as she holes up in a New York hotel to prepare for a medical conference, she recalls, in dense narrative chunks, the mixed blessing of her daughter Helena's birth and the loneliness of her life as an unwed mother. We nearly forget the elder Vera as we watch her postwar counterpart move through a series of au-pair and nurse-helper positions, always hovering at the edge of someone else's household, with her solemn little daughter in tow. But clarity of perception rather than plain misery is what unites these sometimes painful recollections, as when Vera sees her own strain reflected in Helena's pinched, careful movements during a dance class, or when she thrills at the delivery of flowers from the silver-haired man to whom she is both lover and maid. The illicit bouquet must be put in a pail out in the washhouse, but Vera's happiness at receiving it is legitimate on its own terms. A portion of the book appeared in this magazine.

THE TRANSLATOR, by Ward Just (Houghton Mifflin; $21.95). This book takes us from a wartime childhood in northern Germany through a gray middle age in a Paris so contemporary it buzzes with precursors of Germany's reunification. As

Thoroughly modern Mozart

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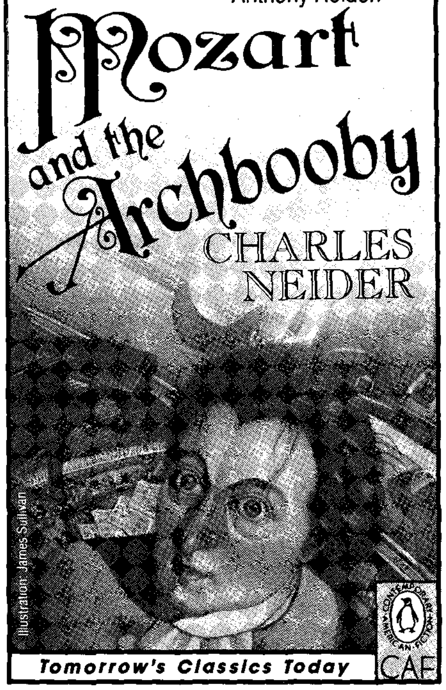
—Anthony Holden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"Uh-huh" + "oh-wow" + "uh-oh" + "oh, God" = "ah-hah!"

UH-OH

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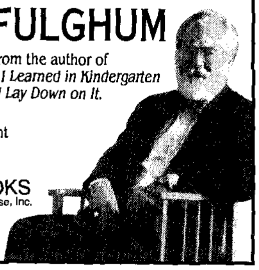

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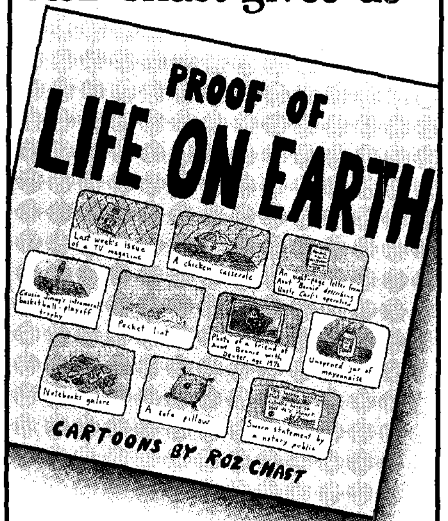
An unopened jar
of mayonnaise.
Roz Chast gives us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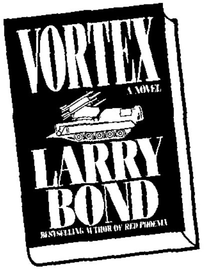

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a child, Siggy van Damm—whose father, a German Army officer, revered Ulysses S. Grant—models himself on Humphrey Bogart. He goes on to master English and then French, and to be cursed by his mother for deserting the fatherland. Siggy becomes Sidney and marries an American; his mother retreats as deep into Germany as she can, behind the Iron Curtain. Now a Paris resident, Sidney devotes himself to making English translations of the austere works of a fellow expatriate German in whom he recognizes his own nostalgia—of a kind that makes return unthinkable, apparently. This novel is both muted and overblown, a parable about modern history and a drama in which just about all the action takes place in the wings. A habitually dry and understated writer, Mr. Just is more interested in the politics of politics than in the politics of emotion, writing about folks so fine that they're above mentioning what most of us might call the stuff of life. He does affect us emotionally, but in a way that nourishes a taste for news rather than for fiction.

### GENERAL

ANNE SEXTON: A BIOGRAPHY, by Diane Wood Middlebrook (Houghton Mifflin; $24.95). For all its supposed revelation, this is an oddly unforthcoming life. Throughout, the biographer has quoted glosses on the poet by people who knew her—family and fellow-writers, doctors and friends. Many seem to want to explain Anne Sexton, or, nearly two decades after her suicide, to understand her, but not so many describe what she actually did or said. And, perhaps because the array of voices was overbalanced by a single source—Sexton's first long-term psychiatrist, who gave her biographer access to extensive tapes of their sessions—the narrative at important moments often relies on the easy words of psychiatry, for a view at once microscopic and distanced, and less often on the acute, life-size details that might reveal what was most individual. Full of testimony to Sexton's disturbing impact on others, this book tells us that she was loved, but does not show why. It does, however, scrupulously contain the events, well told, of her life. And although the account of her leap from her fraught suburban family into the differently fraught poetry world may often present her as merely a painfully needy opportunist, the many drafts, revises, and re-revises quoted and reproduced here firmly belie that. In short, the book should be read with Sexton's best poems close at hand.

FREEDOM: VOLUME I, FREEDOM IN THE MAKING OF WESTERN CULTURE, by Orlando Patterson (Basic; $29.95). According to Mr. Patterson, freedom is not a universal human desire but a "socially constructed" value, which arose in the Western world, and nowhere else, because of certain unique aspects of the West's experience of slavery. The yearning for freedom was first felt and expressed by women, because women were the ones enslaved as the result of wars—men were either killed in battle or executed afterward—but, while the idea of freedom existed wherever there was slavery, only in Greece could it become a value held by the society, because only there was it possible for the freed slave to thrive economically and become part of the community. The author builds his argument with evidence from Homer and Hesiod, Greek dramatists, Roman philosophers, and Christian saints, as well as from a wealth of modern scholarship, which he uses with daunting erudition. He portrays slavery not simply as a precondition of freedom but as its companion through history, and ponders why, at crucial democratic moments—the Athenian republic, the America of the Revolution—slaveholders served as heralds of freedom. Mr. Patterson does more than ask hard questions; he makes a determined attempt to answer them

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APRIL 20, 1991

A boy to Mr. and Mrs. William [illegible] (Kim Shipuleski), 40 Bennett St., [illegible] instead of a girl.—*Announcement in th Putnam (Conn.) Observer Patriot.*

Can't win 'em all.

•

Zimbabwe lost 27 rhinoceros to poacher in 1990, but its new conservation program initiated last year, allowed rangers to shoo to death 28 poachers.—*Newsletter of th International Committee on Cultural Tour ism of the International Council on Monu ments and Sites.*

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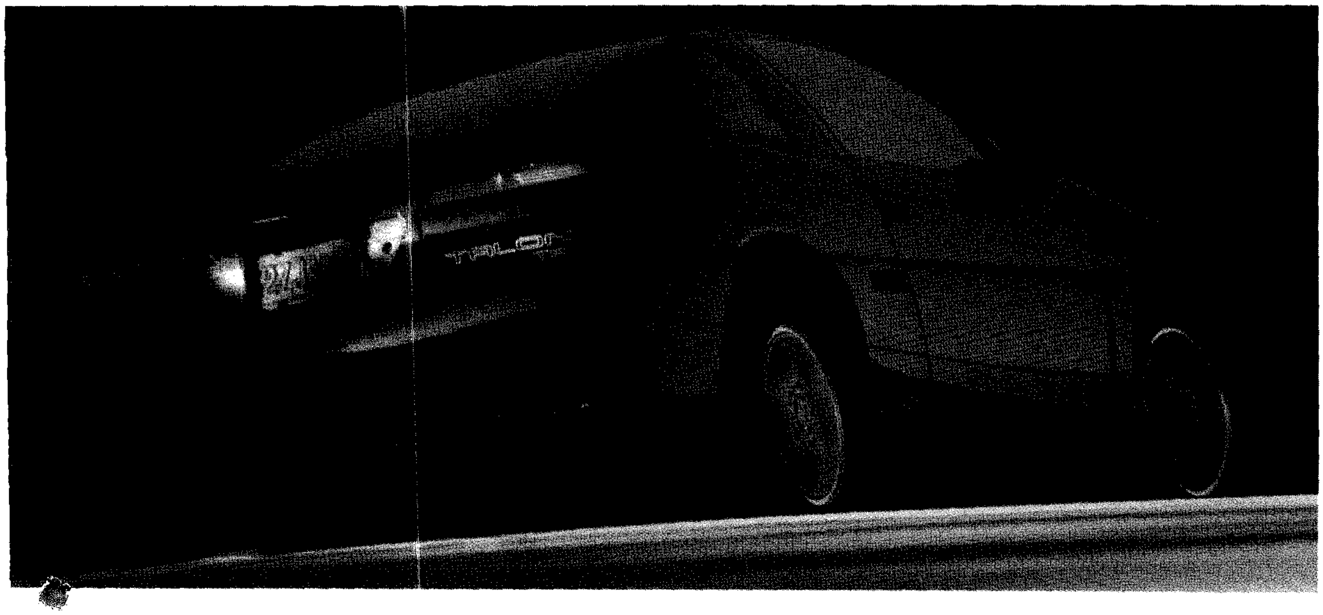

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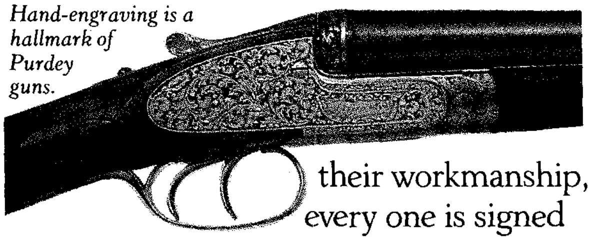

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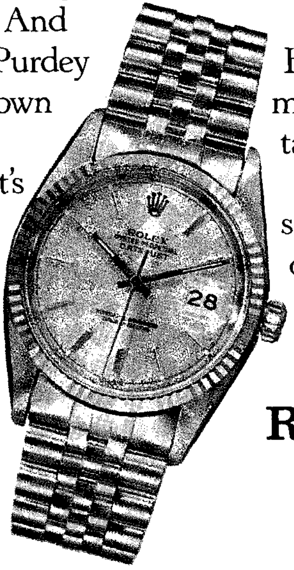

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